RIGHTS OF MAN:

BEING AN

ANSWER TO MR. BURKE'S ATTACK

ON THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

PART I.

BY

T. PAINE,

AUTHOR OF

COMMON SENSE,

LETTER TO THE ABBE RAYNAL, &c. &c.

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TO

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

SIR,

I PRESENT you a ſmall Treatiſe in defence of thoſe Principles of Freedom which your exemplary Virtue hath ſo eminently contributed to eſtabliſh.—That the Rights of Man may become as univerſal as your Benevolence can wiſh, and that you may enjoy the Happineſs of ſeeing the New World regenerate the Old, is the Prayer of,

SIR,

Your much obliged, and

Obedient humble Servant,

T. PAINE.

PREFACE

TO THE

ENGLISH EDITION.

FROM the part Mr. Burke took in the American revolution, it was natural that I ſhould conſider him a friend to mankind; and as our acquaintance commenced on that ground, it would have been more agreeable to me to have had cauſe to continue in that opinion, than to change it.

At the time Mr. Burke made his violent ſpeech laſt winter in the Engliſh parliament againſt the French revolution and the national aſſembly, I was in Paris, and had written him, but a ſhort time before, to inform him how proſperouſly matters were going on. Soon after this, I ſaw his advertiſement of the pamphlet he intended to publiſh: As the attack was to be made in a language but little ſtudied, and leſs underſtood, in France, and as every thing ſuffers by tranſlation, I promiſed ſome of the friends of the revolution in that country, that whenever Mr. Burke's pamphlet came forth, I would anſwer it. This appeared to me the more neceſſary to be done, when I ſaw the flagrant miſrepreſentations which Mr. Burke's pamphlet contains; and that, while it is an outrageous abuſe on the French revolution, and the principles of liberty, it is an impoſition on the reſt of the world.

I am the more aſtoniſhed and diſappointed at this conduct in Mr. Burke, as (from the circumſtance I am going to mention) I had formed other expectations.

I had ſeen enough of the miſeries of war, to wiſh it might never more have exiſtence in the world, and that ſome other mode might be found out to ſettle the differences that ſhould occaſionally ariſe in the neighbourhood of nations. This certainly might be done if courts were diſpoſed to ſet honeſtly about it, or if countries were enlightened enough not to be made the dupes of courts. The people of America had been bred up in the ſame prejudices againſt France, which at that time characterized the people of England; but experience and acquaintance with the French nation have moſt effectually ſhown to the Americans the falſehood of thoſe prejudices; and I do not believe that a more cordial and confidential intercourſe exiſts between any two countries than between America and France.

When I came to France in the ſpring of 1787, *the archbiſhop of Thouloufe was then miniſter, and at that time highly eſteemed. I became much acquainted with the private ſecretary of that miniſter, a man of an enlarged benevolent heart; and found, that his ſentiments and my own perfectly agreed with reſpect to the madneſs of war, and the wretched impolicy of two nations, like England and France, continually worrying each other, to no other end than that of a mutual increaſe of burdens and taxes. That I might be aſſured I had not miſunderſtood him, nor he me, I put the ſubſtance of our opinions into writing, and ſent it to him; ſubjoining a requeſt, that if I ſhould ſee among the people of England any diſpoſition to cultivate a better underſtanding between the two nations than had hitherto prevailed, how far I might be authoriſed to ſay that the ſame diſpoſition prevailed on the part of France? He anſwered me by letter in the moſt unreſerved manner, and that not for himſelf only, but for the miniſter, with whoſe knowledge the letter was declared to be written.*

I put this letter into the hands of Mr. Burke almoſt three years ago, and left it with him, where it ſtill remains; hoping, and at the ſame time naturally expecting, from the opinion I had conceived of him, that he would find ſome opportunity of making a good uſe of it, for the purpoſe of removing thoſe errors and prejudices, which two neighbouring nations, from the want of knowing each other, had entertained, to the injury of both.

When the French revolution broke out, it certainly afforded to Mr. Burke an opportunity of doing ſome good, had he been diſpoſed to it; inſtead of which, no ſooner did he ſee the old prejudices wearing away, than he immediately began ſowing the ſeeds of a new inveteracy, as if he were afraid that England and France would ceaſe to be enemies. That there are men in all countries who get their living by war, and by keeping up the quarrels of nations, is as ſhocking as it is true; but where thoſe who are concerned in the government of a country make it their ſtudy to ſow diſcord, and cultivate prejudices between nations, it becomes the more unpardonable.

With reſpect to a paragraph in this work, alluding to Mr. Burke's having a penſion, the report has been ſome time in circulation, at leaſt two months; and as a perſon is often the laſt to hear what concerns him the moſt to know, I have mentioned it, that Mr. Burke may have an opportunity of contradicting the rumour, if he thinks proper.

T. P.

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PART I.

AMONG the incivilities by which nations or individuals provoke and irritate each other, Mr. Burke's pamphlet on the French Revolution is an extraordinary inſtance. Neither the people of France nor the National Aſſembly were troubling themſelves about the affairs of England, or the Engliſh Parliament; and that Mr. Burke ſhould commence an unprovoked attack upon them, both in parliament and in public, is a conduct that cannot be pardoned on the ſcore of manners, nor juſtified on that of policy.

There is ſcarcely an epithet of abuſe to be found in the Engliſh language with which Mr. Burke has not loaded the French Nation and the National Aſſembly. Every thing which rancour, prejudice, ignorance, or knowledge could ſuggeſt, are poured forth in the copious fury of near four hundred pages. In the ſtrain and on the plan Mr. Burke was writing, he might have written on to as many thouſands. When the tongue or the pen is let looſe in a phrenzy of paſſion, it is the man, and not the ſubject, that becomes exhauſted.

Hitherto Mr. Burke has been miſtaken and diſappointed in the opinions he had formed of the affairs of France; but ſuch is the ingenuity of his hope, or the malignancy of his deſpair, that it furniſhes him with new pretences to go on. There was a time when it was impoſſible to make Mr. Burke believe there would be any revolution in France. His opinion then was, that the French had neither ſpirit to undertake it, nor fortitude to ſupport it; and now that there is one, he ſeeks an eſcape, by condemning it.

Not ſufficiently content with abuſing the National Aſſembly, a great part of his work is taken up with abuſing Dr. Price (one of the beſt-hearted

men that lives), and the two ſocieties in England, known by the name of the Revolution Society, and the Society for Conſtitutional Information.

Dr. Price had preached a ſermon on the 4th of November 1789, being the anniverſary of what is called in England the Revolution, which took place 1688. Mr. Burke, ſpeaking of this ſermon, ſays, "The Political "Divine proceeds dogmatically to aſſert, that by the principles of the Revo- "lution, the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights:

"1. To chooſe our own governors.

"2. To caſhier them for miſconduct.

"3. To frame a government for ourſelves."

Dr. Price does not ſay that the right to do theſe things exiſts in this or in that perſon, or in this or in that deſcription of perſons, but that it exiſts in the whole; that it is a right reſident in the nation.—Mr. Burke, on the contrary, denies that ſuch a right exiſts in the nation, either in whole or in part, or that it exiſts any where; and, what is ſtill more ſtrange and marvellous, he ſays, "that the people of England utterly diſclaim ſuch a right, "and that they will reſiſt the practical aſſertion of it with their lives and "fortunes." That men ſhould take up arms, and ſpend their lives and fortunes, *not* to maintain their rights, but to maintain they have *not* rights, is an entirely new ſpecies of diſcovery, and ſuited to the paradoxical genius of Mr. Burke.

The method which Mr. Burke takes to prove that the people of England have no ſuch rights, and that ſuch rights do not now exiſt in the nation, either in whole or in part, or any where at all, is of the ſame marvellous and monſtrous kind with what he has already ſaid; for his arguments are, that the perſons, or the generation of perſons, in whom they did exiſt, are dead, and with them the right is dead alſo. To prove this, he quotes a declaration made by parliament about a hundred years ago, to William and Mary, in theſe words: "The Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, "do, in the name of the people aforeſaid"—(meaning the people of England then living)—"moſt humbly and faithfully *ſubmit* themſelves, their *heirs*, "and *poſterities*, for EVER." He quotes a clauſe of another act of parliament made in the ſame reign, the terms of which, he ſays, "bind us"—(meaning the people of that day)—"our *heirs*, and our *poſterity*, to *them*, "their *heirs* and *poſterity*, to the end of time."

Mr. Burke conceives his point ſufficiently eſtabliſhed by producing thoſe clauſes, which he enforces by ſaying that they exclude the right of the nation for *ever*. And not yet content with making ſuch declarations, repeated over and over again, he farther ſays, "that if the people of England poſſeſſed ſuch "a right before the Revolution (which he acknowledges to have been the caſe, not only in England, but throughout Europe, at an early period), "yet "that the *Engliſh nation* did, at the time of the Revolution, moſt ſolemnly "renounce and abdicate it, for themſelves, and for *all their poſterity for ever*."

As Mr. Burke occaſionally applies the poiſon drawn from his horrid principles not only to the Engliſh nation, but to the French Revolution and the National Aſſembly, and charges that auguſt, illuminated and illuminating body of men with the epithet of *uſurpers*, I ſhall, *ſans ceremonie*, place another ſyſtem of principles in oppoſition to his.

The Engliſh Parliament of 1688 did a certain thing, which, for themſelves and their conſtituents, they had a right to do, and which it appeared right ſhould be done: But, in addition to this right, which they poſſeſſed by delegation, *they ſet up another right by aſſumption*, that of binding and controuling poſterity to the end of time. The caſe, therefore, divides itſelf into two

parts; the right which they poſſeſſed by delegation, and the right which they ſet up by aſſumption. The firſt is admitted; but with reſpect to the ſecond, I reply—

There never did, there never will, and there never can exiſt a parliament, or any deſcription of men, or any generation of men, in any country, poſſeſſed of the right or the power of binding and controuling poſterity to the "*end of time*," or of commanding for ever how the world ſhall be governed, or who ſhall govern it; and, therefore, all ſuch clauſes, acts, or declarations, by which the makers of them attempt to do what they have neither the right nor the power to do, nor the power to execute, are in themſelves null and void.—Every age and generation muſt be as free to act for itſelf, *in all caſes*, as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and preſumption of governing beyond the grave, is the moſt ridiculous and inſolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow. The parliament or the people of 1688, or of any other period, had no more right to diſpoſe of the people of the preſent day, or to bind or to controul them *in any ſhape whatever*, than the parliament or the people of the preſent day have to diſpoſe of, bind, or controul, thoſe who are to live a hundred or a thouſand years hence. Every generation is, and muſt be, competent to all the purpoſes which its occaſions require. It is the living, and not the dead, that are to be accommodated. When man ceaſes to be, his power and his wants ceaſe with him; and having no longer any participation in the concerns of this world, he has no longer any authority in directing who ſhall be its governors, or how its government ſhall be organized, or how adminiſtered.

I am not contending for, nor againſt, any form of government, nor for, nor againſt, any party here or elſewhere. That which a whole nation chooſes to do, it has a right to do. Mr. Burke ſays, No. Where then *does* the right exiſt? I am contending for the rights of the *living*, and againſt their being willed away, and controuled and contracted for, by the manuſcript aſſumed authority of the dead; and Mr. Burke is contending for the authority of the dead over the rights and freedom of the living. There was a time when kings diſpoſed of their crowns by will upon their death-beds, and conſigned the people, like beaſts of the field, to whatever ſucceſſor they appointed. This is now ſo exploded as ſcarcely to be remembered, and ſo monſtrous as hardly to be believed: But the parliamentary clauſes upon which Mr. Burke builds his political church, are of the ſame nature.

The laws of every country muſt be analogous to ſome common principle. In England, no parent or maſter, nor all the authority of parliament, omnipotent as it has called itſelf, can bind or controul the perſonal freedom even of an individual beyond the age of twenty-one years: On what ground of right, then, could the parliament of 1688, or any other parliament, bind all poſterity for ever?

Thoſe who have quitted the world, and thoſe who are not yet arrived at it, are as remote from each other, as the utmoſt ſtretch of mortal imagination can conceive: What poſſible obligation, then, can exiſt between them; what rule or principle can be laid down, that of two non-entities, the one out of exiſtence, and the other not in, and who never can meet in this world, the one ſhould controul the other to the end of time?

In England, it is ſaid, that money cannot be taken out of the pockets of the people without their conſent: But who authoriſed, or who could authoriſe, the parliament of 1688 to controul and take away the freedom of poſ-

terity

terity (who were not in exiſtence to give or to withhold their conſent), and limit and confine their right of acting in certain caſes for ever?

A greater abſurdity cannot preſent itſelf to the underſtanding of man, than what Mr. Burke offers to his readers. He tells them, and he tells the world to come, that a certain body of men, who exiſted a hundred years ago, made a law; and that there does not now exiſt in the nation, nor ever will, nor ever can, a power to alter it. Under how many ſubtleties or abſurdities has the divine right to govern been impoſed on the credulity of mankind! Mr. Burke has diſcovered a new one, and he has ſhortened his journey to Rome, by appealing to the power of this infallible parliament of former days; and he produces what it has done, as of divine authority: For that power muſt certainly be more than human, which no human power to the end of time can alter.

But Mr. Burke has done ſome ſervice, not to his cauſe, but to his country, by bringing thoſe clauſes into public view. They ſerve to demonſtrate how neceſſary it is at all times to watch againſt the attempted encroachment of power, and to prevent its running to exceſs. It is ſomewhat extraordinary, that the offence for which James II. was expelled, that of ſetting up power by *aſſumption*, ſhould be re-acted, under another ſhape and form, by the parliament that expelled him. It ſhews, that the rights of man were but imperfectly underſtood at the Revolution; for certain it is, that the right which that parliament ſet up by *aſſumption* (for by delegation it had it not, and it could not have it, becauſe none could give it) over the perſons and freedom of poſterity for ever, was of the ſame tyrannical unfounded kind which James attempted to ſet up over the parliament and the nation, and for which he was expelled. The only difference is (for in principles they differ not), that the one was an uſurper over the living, and the other over the unborn; and as one has no better authority to ſtand upon than the other, both of them muſt be equally null and void, and of no effect.

From what, or from whence, does Mr. Burke prove the right of any human power to bind poſterity for ever? He has produced his clauſes; but he muſt produce alſo his proofs, that ſuch a right exiſted, and ſhew how it exiſted. If it ever exiſted, it muſt now exiſt; for whatever appertains to the nature of man, cannot be annihilated by man. It is the nature of man to die, and he will continue to die as long as he continues to be born. But Mr. Burke has ſet up a ſort of political Adam, in whom all poſterity are bound for ever; he muſt therefore prove that his Adam poſſeſſed ſuch a power, or ſuch a right.

The weaker any cord is, the leſs will it bear to be ſtretched, and the worſe is the policy to ſtretch it, unleſs it is intended to break it. Had any one purpoſed the overthrow of Mr. Burke poſitions, he would have proceeded as Mr. Burke has done. He would have magnified the authorities, on purpoſe to have called the *right* of them into queſtion; and the inſtant the queſtion of right was ſtarted, the authorities muſt have been given up.

It requires but a very ſmall glance of thought to perceive, that although laws made in one generation often continue in force through ſucceeding generations, yet that they continue to derive their force from the conſent of the living. A law not repealed continues in force, not becauſe it *cannot* be repealed, but becauſe it *is not* repealed; and the non repealing paſſes for conſent.

But Mr. Burke's clauſes have not even this qualification in their favour. They become null, by attempting to become immortal. The nature of them precludes

precludes conſent. They deſtroy the right which they *might* have, by grounding it on a right which they *cannot* have. Immortal power is not a human right, and therefore cannot be a right of parliament. The parliament of 1688 might as well have paſſed an act to have authoriſed themſelves to live for ever, as to make their authority live for ever. All therefore that can be ſaid of thoſe clauſes is, that they are a formality of words, of as much import, as if thoſe who uſed them had addreſſed a congratulation to themſelves, and, in the Oriental ſtyle of antiquity, had ſaid, O Parliament, live for ever!

The circumſtances of the world are continually changing, and the opinions of men change alſo; and as government is for the living, and not for the dead, it is the living only that has any right in it. That which may be thought right and found convenient in one age, may be thought wrong and found inconvenient in another. In ſuch caſes, who is to decide, the living, or the dead?

As almoſt one hundred pages of Mr Burke's book are employed upon theſe clauſes, it will conſequently follow, that, if the clauſes themſelves, ſo far as they ſet up an *aſſumed, uſurped* dominion over poſterity for ever, are unauthoritative, and in their nature null and void; all his voluminous inferences and declamation drawn therefrom, or founded thereon, are null and void alſo: And on this ground I reſt the matter.

We now come more particularly to the affairs of France. Mr. Burke's book has the appearance of being written as inſtruction to the French nation; but if I may permit myſelf the uſe of an extravagant metaphor, ſuited to the extravagance of the caſe, it is darkneſs attempting to illuminate light.

While I am writing this, there are accidentally before me ſome propoſals for a declaration of rights by the Marquis de la Fayette (I aſk his pardon for uſing his former addreſs, and do it only for diſtinction's ſake) to the National Aſſembly, on the 11th of July 1789, three days before the taking of the Baſtille; and I cannot but remark with aſtoniſhment how oppoſite the ſources are from which that Gentleman and Mr. Burke draw their principles. Inſtead of referring to muſty records and mouldy parchments to prove that the rights of the living are loſt, "renounced and abdicated for ever," by thoſe who are now no more, as Mr. Burke has done, M. de la Fayette applies to the living world, and emphatically ſays, "Call to mind the ſentiments which "Nature has engraved in the heart of every citizen, and which take a new "force when they are ſolemnly recognized by all:—For a nation to love li-"berty, it is ſufficient that ſhe knows it; and to be free, it is ſufficient "that ſhe wills it." How dry, barren, and obſcure, is the ſource from which Mr. Burke labours! and how ineffectual, though gay with flowers, are all his declamation and his arguments, compared with theſe clear, conciſe, and ſoul-animating ſentiments! Few and ſhort as they are, they lead on to a vaſt field of generous and manly thinking, and do not finiſh, like Mr. Burke's periods, with muſic in the ear, and nothing in the heart.

As I have introduced M. de la Fayette, I will take the liberty of adding an anecdote reſpecting his farewell addreſs to the Congreſs of America, in 1783, and which occurred freſh to my mind when I ſaw Mr. Burke's thundering attack on the French Revolution.——M. de la Fayette went to America at an early period of the war, and continued a volunteer in her ſervice to the end. His conduct through the whole of that enterpriſe is one of the moſt extraordinary that is to be found in the hiſtory of a young man, ſcarcely then twenty years of age. Situated in a country that was like the lap of ſenſual pleaſure,

and

and with the means of enjoying it, how few are there to be found who would exchange ſuch a ſcene for the woods and wilderneſſes of America, and paſs the flowery years of youth in unprofitable danger and hardſhip! but ſuch is the fact. When the war ended, and he was on the point of taking his final departure, he preſented himſelf to Congreſs, and contemplating, in his affectionate farewell, the revolution he had ſeen, expreſſed himſelf in theſe words: "*May this great monument, raiſed to Liberty, ſerve as a leſſon to the oppreſſor,* "*and an example to the oppreſſed!*"—When this address came to the hands of Dr. Franklin, who was then in France, he applied to Count Vergennes to have it inſerted in the French Gazette, but never could gain his conſent. The fact was, that Count Vergennes was an ariſtocratical deſpot at home, and dreaded the example of the American revolution in France, as certain other perſons now dread the example of the French revolution in England; and Mr. Burke's tribute of fear (for in this light his book muſt be conſidered) runs parallel with Count Vergennes' refuſal. But to return more particularly to this work—

"We have ſeen (ſays Mr. Burke) the French rebel againſt a mild and "lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage, and inſult, than any people "has been known to riſe againſt the moſt illegal uſurper, or the moſt ſan-"guinary tyrant."—This is one among a thouſand other inſtances, in which Mr. Burke ſhews that he is ignorant of the ſprings and principles of the French revolution.

It was not againſt Louis the XVIth, but againſt the deſpotic principles of the government, that the nation revolted. Theſe principles had not their origin in himſelf, but in the original eſtabliſhment many centuries back; and they were become too deeply rooted to be removed, and the Augean ſtable of paraſites and plunderers too abominably filthy to be cleanſed, by any thing ſhort of a complete and univerſal revolution. When it becomes neceſſary to do any thing, the whole heart and ſoul ſhould go into the meaſure, or not attempt it. That criſis was then arrived, and there remained no choice but to act with determined vigour, or not to act at all. The king was known to be the friend of the nation, and this circumſtance was favourable to the enterpriſe. Perhaps no man bred up in the ſtyle of an abſolute king, ever poſſeſſed a heart ſo little diſpoſed to the exerciſe of that ſpecies of power as the preſent King of France. But the principles of the government itſelf ſtill remained the ſame. The monarch and the monarchy were diſtinct and ſeparate things; and it was againſt the eſtabliſhed deſpotiſm of the latter, and not againſt the perſon or principles of the former, that the revolt commenced, and the revolution has been carried.

Mr. Burke does not attend to the diſtinction between *men* and *principles*; and therefore he does not ſee that a revolt may take place againſt the deſpotiſm of the latter, while there lies no charge of deſpotiſm againſt the former.

The natural moderation of Louis XVI. contributed nothing to alter the hereditary deſpotiſm of the monarchy. All the tyrannies of former reigns, acted under the hereditary deſpotiſm, were ſtill liable to be revived in the hands of a ſucceſſor. It was not the reſpite of a reign that would ſatisfy France, enlightened as ſhe was then become. A caſual diſcontinuance of the *practice* of deſpotiſm, is not a diſcontinuance of its *principles*; the former depends on the virtue of the individual who is in immediate poſſeſſion of the power; the latter, on the virtue and fortitude of the nation. In the caſe of Charles I. and James II. of England, the revolt was againſt the perſonal deſpotiſm of the men; whereas, in France, it was againſt the hereditary

deſpotiſm

deſpotiſm of the eſtabliſhed government. But men who can conſign over the rights of poſterity for ever on the authority of a mouldy parchment, like Mr. Burke, are not qualified to judge of this revolution. It takes in a field too vaſt for their views to explore, and proceeds with a mightineſs of reaſon they cannot keep pace with.

But there are many points of view in which this revolution may be conſidered. When deſpotiſm has eſtabliſhed itſelf for ages in a country, as in France, it is not in the perſon of the King only that it reſides. It has the appearance of being ſo in ſhow, and in nominal authority; but it is not ſo in practice, and in fact. It has its ſtandard every-where. Every office and department has its deſpotiſm, founded upon cuſtom and uſage. Every place has its Baſtille, and every Baſtille its deſpot. The original hereditary deſpotiſm reſident in the perſon of the King, divides and ſubdivides itſelf into a thouſand ſhapes and forms, till at laſt the whole of it is acted by deputation. This was the caſe in France; and againſt this ſpecies of deſpotiſm, proceeding on through an endleſs labyrinth of office, till the ſource of it is ſcarcely perceptible, there is no mode of redreſs. It ſtrengthens itſelf by aſſuming the appearance of duty, and tyrannizes under the pretence of obeying.

When a man reflects on the condition which France was in from the nature of her government, he will ſee other cauſes for revolt than thoſe which immediately connect themſelves with the perſon or character of Louis XVI. There were, if I may ſo expreſs it, a thouſand deſpotiſms to be reformed in France, which had grown up under the hereditary deſpotiſm of the monarchy, and became ſo rooted as to be in a great meaſure independent of it. Between the monarchy, the parliament, and the church, there was a *rivalſhip* of deſpotiſm; beſides the feudal deſpotiſm operating locally, and the miniſterial deſpotiſm operating every-where. But Mr. Burke, by conſidering the King as the only poſſible object of a revolt, ſpeaks as if France was a village, in which every thing that paſſed muſt be known to its commanding officer, and no oppreſſion could be acted but what he could immediately controul. Mr. Burke might have been in the Baſtille his whole life, as well under Louis XVI. as Louis XIV. and neither the one nor the other have known that ſuch a man as Mr. Burke exiſted. The deſpotic principles of the government were the ſame in both reigns, though the diſpoſitions of the men were as remote as tyranny and benevolence.

What Mr. Burke conſiders as a reproach to the French Revolution (that of bringing it forward under a reign more mild than the preceding ones), is one of its higheſt honours. The revolutions that have taken place in other European countries, have been excited by perſonal hatred. The rage was againſt the man, and he became the victim. But, in the inſtance of France, we ſee a revolution generated in the rational contemplation of the rights of man, and diſtinguiſhing from the beginning between perſons and principles.

But Mr. Burke appears to have no idea of principles, when he is contemplating governments. "Ten years ago (ſays he) I could have felicitated "France on her having a government, without inquiring what the nature of "that government was, or how it was adminiſtered." Is this the language of a rational man? Is it the language of a heart, feeling as it ought to feel for the rights and happineſs of the human race? On this ground, Mr. Burke muſt compliment all the governments in the world, while the victims who ſuffer under them, whether ſold into ſlavery, or tortured out of exiſtence, are wholly forgotten. It is power, and not principles, that Mr. Burke venerates; and

and under this abominable depravity, he is disqualified to judge between them —Thus much for his opinion as to the occasions of the French Revolution. I now proceed to other considerations.

I know a place in America called Point-no-Point; because as you proceed along the shore, gay and flowery as Mr. Burke's language, it continually recedes and presents itself at a distance before you; but when you have got as far as you can go, there is no point at all. Just thus it is with Mr. Burke's three hundred and fifty six pages. It is therefore difficult to reply to him. But as the points he wishes to establish, may be inferred from what he abuses, it is in his paradoxes that we must look for his arguments.

As to the tragic paintings by which Mr. Burke has outraged his own imagination, and seeks to work upon that of his readers, they are very well calculated for theatrical representation, where facts are manufactured for the sake of show, and accommodated to produce, through the weakness of sympathy, a weeping effect. But Mr. Burke should recollect that he is writing History, and not *Plays*; and that his readers will expect truth, and not the spouting rant of high-toned exclamation.

When we see a man dramatically lamenting in a publication intended to be believed, that, "*The age of chivalry is gone*; that *The glory of Europe is extinguished for ever*; that *The unbought grace of life* (if any one knows what it is), *the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone*;" and all this because the Quixot age of chivalry-nonsense is gone, what opinion can we form of his judgment, or what regard can we pay to his facts? In the rhapsody of his imagination, he has discovered a world of wind-mills, and his sorrows are, that there are no Quixots to attack them. But if the age of ariflocracy, like that of chivalry, should fall (and they had originally some connection), Mr. Burke, the trumpeter of the Order, may continue his parody to the end, and finish with exclaiming, "*Othello's occupation's gone!*"

Notwithstanding Mr. Burke's horrid paintings, when the French Revolution is compared with the revolutions of other countries, the astonishment will cease when we reflect that *principles*, and not *persons*, were the meditated objects of destruction. The mind of the nation was acted upon by a higher stimulus than what the consideration of persons could inspire, and sought a higher conquest than could be produced by the downfall of an enemy. Among the few who fell, there do not appear to be any that were intentionally singled out. They all of them had their fate in the circumstances of the moment, and were not pursued with that long, cold-blooded, unabated revenge which pursued the unfortunate Scotch in the affair of 1745.

Through the whole of Mr. Burke's book I do not observe that the Bastille is mentioned more than once, and that with a kind of implication as if he were sorry it was pulled down, and wished it were built up again. "We have "rebuilt Newgate (says he) and tenanted the mansion; and we have prisons "almost as strong as the Bastille for those who dare to libel the Queens of "France*." As to what a madman, like the person called Lord G——— G———,

* *Since writing the above, two other places occur in Mr. Burke's pamphlet, in which the name of the Bastille is mentioned, but in the same manner. In the one he introduces it in a sort of obscure question, and asks*—"*Will any ministers who now serve such a king, with but a decent appearance of respect, cordially obey the orders of those whom but the other day, in his name, they had committed to the Bastille?*" *In the other, the taking it is mentioned as implying criminality in the French*

G———, might ſay, and to whom Newgate is rather a bedlam than a priſon, it is unworthy a rational conſideration. It was a madman that libelled—and that is a ſufficient apology; and it afforded an opportunity for confining him, which was the thing that was wiſhed for: But certain it is, that Mr. Burke, who does not call himſelf a madman, (whatever other people may do,) has libelled, in the moſt unprovoked manner, and in the groſſeſt ſtile of the moſt vulgar abuſe, the whole repreſentative authority of France; and yet Mr. Burke takes his ſeat in the Britiſh Houſe of Commons! From his violence and his grief, his ſilence on ſome points, and his exceſs on others, it is difficult not to believe that Mr. Burke is ſorry, extremely ſorry, that arbitrary power, the power of the Pope, and the Baſtille are pulled down.

Not one glance of compaſſion, not one commiſerating reflection, that I can find throughout his book, has he beſtowed on thoſe who lingered out the moſt wretched of lives, a life without hope, in the moſt miſerable of priſons. It is painful to behold a man employing his talents to corrupt himſelf. Nature has been kinder to Mr. Burke than he is to her. He is not affected by the reality of diſtreſs touching his heart, but by the ſhowy reſemblance of it ſtriking his imagination. He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird. Accuſtomed to kiſs the ariſtocratical hand that has purloined him from himſelf, he degenerates into a compoſition of art, and the genuine ſoul of nature forſakes him. His hero or his heroine muſt be a tragedy-victim expiring in ſhow, and not the real priſoner of miſery, ſhiding into death in the ſilence of a dungeon.

As Mr. Burke has paſſed over the whole tranſaction of the Baſtille (and his ſilence is nothing in his favour), and has entertained his readers with reflections on ſuppoſed facts diſtorted into real falſehoods, I will give, ſince he has not, ſome account of the circumſtances which preceded that tranſaction. They will ſerve to ſhew, that leſs miſchief could ſcarcely have accompanied ſuch an event, when conſidered with the treacherous and hoſtile aggravations of the enemies of the Revolution.

The mind can hardly picture to itſelf a more tremendous ſcene than what the city of Paris exhibited at the time of taking the Baſtille, and for two days before and after, nor conceive the poſſibility of its quieting ſo ſoon. At a diſtance, this tranſaction has appeared only as an act of heroiſm, ſtanding on itſelf; and the cloſe political connection it had with the Revolution is loſt in the brilliancy of the atchievement. But we are to conſider it as the ſtrength of the parties, brought man to man, and contending for the iſſue. The Baſtille was to be either the prize or the priſon of the aſſailants. The downfal of it included the idea of the downfal of Deſpotiſm; and this compounded image was become as figuratively united as Bunyan's Doubting Caſtle and Giant Deſpair.

The National Aſſembly, before and at the time of taking the Baſtille, was ſitting at Verſailles, twelve miles diſtant from Paris. About a week before the riſing of the Pariſians, and their taking the Baſtille, it was diſcovered that a plot was forming, at the head of which was the Count d'Artois, the king's youngeſt brother, for demoliſhing the National Aſſembly, ſeizing its members, and thereby cruſhing, by a *coup de main*, all hopes and proſpects of forming a free government. For the ſake of humanity, as well as of freedom, it is well this plan did not ſucceed. Examples are not wanting to ſhew how dreadfully

French guards who aſſiſted in demoliſhing it.—"*They have not (ſays he) forget the taking the king's caſtles at Paris.*"—*This is Mr. Burke, who pretends to write on conſtitutional freedom.*

vindictive and cruel are all old governments, when they are ſucceſsful againſt what they call a revolt.

This plan muſt have been ſome time in contemplation; becauſe, in order to carry it into execution, it was neceſſary to collect a large military force round Paris, and to cut off the communication between that city and the National Aſſembly at Verſailles. The troops deſtined for this ſervice were chiefly the foreign troops in the pay of France, and who, for this particular purpoſe, were drawn from the diſtant provinces where they were then ſtationed. When they were collected, to the amount of between twenty-five and thirty thouſand, it was judged time to put the plan in execution. The miniſtry who were then in office, and who were friendly to the Revolution, were inſtantly diſmiſſed, and a new miniſtry formed of thoſe who had concerted the project;—among whom was Count de Broglio, and to his ſhare was given the command of thoſe troops. The character of this man, as deſcribed to me in a letter which I communicated to Mr. Burke before he began to write his book, and from an authority which Mr. Burke well knows was good, was that of "an high-flying ariſtocrat, cool, and capable of every "miſchief."

While theſe matters were agitating, the National Aſſembly ſtood in the moſt perilous and critical ſituation that a body of men can be ſuppoſed to act in. They were the devoted victims, and they knew it. They had the hearts and wiſhes of their country on their ſide, but military authority they had none. The guards of Broglio ſurrounded the hall where the aſſembly ſat, ready, at the word of command, to ſeize their perſons, as had been done the year before to the parliament of Paris. Had the National Aſſembly deſerted their truſt, or had they exhibited ſigns of weakneſs or fear their enemies had been encouraged, and the country depreſſed. When the ſituation they ſtood in, the cauſe they were engaged in, and the criſis then ready to burſt (which was to determine their perſonal and political fate, and that of their country, and probably of Europe) are taken into one view, none but a heart callous with prejudice, or corrupted by dependance, can avoid intereſting itſelf in their ſucceſs.

The archbiſhop of Vienne was at this time preſident of the National Aſſembly; a perſon too old to undergo the ſcene that a few days, or a few hours might bring forth. A man of more activity, and greater fortitude, was neceſſary; and the National Aſſembly choſe under the form of a vice preſident, (for the preſidency reſided in the archbiſhop) M. de la Fayette; and this is the only inſtance of a vice preſident being choſen. It was at the moment that this ſtorm was pending (July 11) that a declaration of rights was brought forward by M. de la Fayette, and is the ſame which is alluded to in page 9. It was haſtily drawn up, and makes only a part of a more extenſive declaration of rights, agreed upon and adopted afterwards by the National Aſſembly. The particular reaſon for bringing it forward at this moment, (M. de la Fayette has ſince informed me) was, that if the National Aſſembly ſhould fall in the threatened deſtruction that then ſurrounded it, ſome traces of its principles might have the chance of ſurviving the wreck.

Every thing now was drawing to a criſis. The event was to be freedom or ſlavery. On one ſide, an army of nearly thirty thouſand men; on the other, an unarmed body of citizens: For the citizens of Paris, on whom the National Aſſembly muſt then immediately depend, were as unarmed and as undiſciplined as the citizens of London are now.—The French guards had given ſtrong ſymptoms of their being attached to the national cauſe; but their numbers were ſmall, not a tenth part of the force that Broglio commanded, and their officers were in the intereſt of Broglio.

Matters

Matters being now ripe for execution, the new miniſtry made their appearance in office. The reader will carry in his mind, that the Baſtille was taken the 14th of July: The point of time I am now ſpeaking to, is the 12th. Immediately on the news of the change of miniſtry reaching Paris, in the afternoon, all the play-houſes and places of entertainment, ſhops and houſes, were ſhut up. The change of miniſtry was conſidered as the prelude of hoſtilities and the opinion was rightly founded.

The foreign troops began to advance towards the city. The Prince de Lambeſc, who commanded a body of German cavalry, approached by the place of Lewis XV. which connects itſelf with ſome of the ſtreets. In his march, he inſulted and ſtruck an old man with his ſword. The French are remarkable for their reſpect to old age, and the inſolence with which it appeared to be done, uniting with the general fermentation they were in, produced a powerful effect, and a cry of *To arms! to arms!* ſpread itſelf in a moment over the city.

Arms they had none, nor ſcarcely any who knew the uſe of them: But deſperate reſolution, when every hope is at ſtake, ſupplies, for a while, the want of arms. Near where the Prince de Lambeſc was drawn up, were large piles of ſtones collected for building the new bridge, and with theſe the people attacked the cavalry. A party of the French guards, upon hearing the firings, ruſhed from their quarters and joined the people; and night coming on the cavalry retreated.

The ſtreets of Paris, being narrow, are favourable for defence; and the loftineſs of the houſes, conſiſting of many ſtories, from which great annoyance might be given, ſecured them againſt nocturnal enterpriſes; and the night was ſpent in providing themſelves with every ſort of weapon they could make or procure: Guns, ſwords, blackſmiths hammers, carpenters axes, iron crows, pikes, halberts, pitch-forks, ſpits, clubs, &c. &c. The incredible numbers in which they aſſembled the next morning, and the ſtill more incredible reſolution they exhibited, embarraſſed and aſtoniſhed their enemies. Little did the new miniſtry expect ſuch a ſalute. Accuſtomed to ſlavery themſelves, they had no idea that Liberty was capable of ſuch inſpiration, or that a body of unarmed citizens would dare to face the military force of thirty thouſand men. Every moment of this day was employed in collecting arms, concerting plans, and arranging themſelves into the beſt order which ſuch an inſtantaneous movement could afford. Broglio continued lying round the city, but made no farther advances this day, and the ſucceeding night paſſed with as much tranquillity as ſuch a ſcene could poſſibly admit.

But defence only was not the object of the citizens. They had a cauſe at ſtake, on which depended their freedom or their ſlavery. They every moment expected an attack, or to hear of one made on the National Aſſembly; and in ſuch a ſituation, the moſt prompt meaſures are ſometimes the beſt. The object that now preſented itſelf was the Baſtille; and the eclat of carrying ſuch a fortreſs in the face of ſuch an army, could not fail to ſtrike a terror into the new miniſtry, who had ſcarcely yet had time to meet. By ſome intercepted correſpondence this morning, it was diſcovered, that the Mayor of Paris, M. Deſſeſſelles, who appeared to be in the intereſt of the citizens, was betraying them; and from this diſcovery, there remained no doubt that Broglio would reinforce the Baſtille the enſuing evening. It was therefore neceſſary to attack it that day; but before this could be done, it was firſt neceſſary to procure a better ſupply of arms than they were then poſſeſſed of.

There was adjoining to the city a large magazine of arms depoſited in the Hoſpital of Invalids, which the citizens ſummoned to ſurrender; and as the

place was not defensible, nor attempted much defence, they soon succeeded. Thus supplied, they marched to attack the Bastille; a vast mixed multitude of all ages, and of all degrees, and armed with all sorts of weapons. Imagination would fail in describing to itself the appearance of such a procession, and of the anxiety for the events which a few hours or a few minutes might produce. What plans the ministry was forming, were as unknown to the people within the city, as what the citizens were doing was unknown to the ministry; and what movements Broglio might make for the support or relief of the place, were to the citizens as equally unknown. All was mystery and hazard.

That the Bastille was attacked with an enthusiasm of heroism, such only as the highest animation of liberty could inspire, and carried in the space of a few hours, is an event which the world is fully possessed of. I am not undertaking a detail of the attack; but bringing into view the conspiracy against the nation which provoked it, and which fell with the Bastille. The prison to which the new ministry were dooming the National Assembly, in addition to its being the high altar and castle of despotism, became the proper object to begin with. This enterprise broke up the new ministry, who began now to fly from the ruin they had prepared for others. The troops of Broglio dispersed, and himself fled also.

Mr. Burke has spoken a great deal about plots, but he has never once spoken of this plot against the National Assembly, and the liberties of the nation; and that he might not, he has passed over all the circumstances that might throw it in his way. The exiles who have fled from France, whose case he so much interests himself in, and from whom he has had his lesson, fled in consequence of the miscarriage of this plot. No plot was formed against them: They were plotting against others; and those who fell, met, not unjustly, the punishment they were preparing to execute. But will Mr. Burke say, that if this plot, contrived with the subtilty of an ambuscade, had succeeded, the successful party would have restrained their wrath so soon? Let the history of all old governments answer the question.

Whom has the National Assembly brought to the scaffold? None. They were themselves the devoted victims of this plot, and they have not retaliated; why then are they charged with revenge they have not acted? In the tremendous breaking forth of a whole people in which all degrees, tempers, and characters are confounded, and delivering themselves, by a miracle of exertion, from the destruction meditated against them, is it to be expected that nothing will happen? When men are sore with the sense of oppressions, and menaced with the prospect of new ones, is the calmness of philosophy, or the palsy of insensibility, to be looked for? Mr. Burke exclaims against outrage; yet the greatest is that which himself has committed. His book is a volume of outrage, not apologized for by the impulse of a moment, but cherished through a space of ten months; yet Mr. Burke had no provocation—no life, no interest at stake.

More of the citizens fell in this struggle than of their opponents: But four or five persons were seized by the populace, and instantly put to death; the Governor of the Bastille, and the Mayor of Paris, who was detected in the act of betraying them; and afterwards Foulon, one of the new ministry, and Berthier his son in-law, who had accepted the office of Intendant of Paris. Their heads were stuck upon spikes, and carried about the city; and it is upon this mode of punishment that Mr. Burke builds a great part of his tragic scene. Let us therefore examine how men came by the idea of punishing in this manner.

They

They learn it from the government they live under, and retaliate the punishments they have been accustomed to behold. The heads stuck upon spikes, which remained for years upon Temple-bar, differed nothing in the horror of the scene from those carried about upon spikes at Paris: Yet this was done by the English government. It may perhaps be said, that it signifies nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead; but it signifies much to the living: It either tortures their feelings, or hardens their hearts; and in either case, it instructs them how to punish when power falls into their hands.

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach governments humanity. It is their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind. In England, the punishment in certain cases, is by *hanging*, *drawing*, and *quartering*; the heart of the sufferer is cut out, and held up to the view of the populace. In France, under the former government, the punishments were not less barbarous. Who does not remember the execution of Damien, torn to pieces by horses? The effect of those cruel spectacles exhibited to the populace, is to destroy tenderness, or excite revenge; and by the base and false idea of governing men by terror, instead of reason, they become precedents. It is over the lowest class of mankind that government by terror is intended to operate, and it is on them that it operates to the worst effect. They have sense enough to feel they are the objects aimed at; and they inflict in their turn the examples of terror they have been instructed to practise.

There is in all European countries, a large class of people of that description which in England is called the "*mob*." Of this class were those who committed the burnings and devastations in London in 1780, and of this class were those who carried the heads upon spikes in Paris. Foulon and Berthier were taken up in the country, and sent to Paris, to undergo their examination at the Hotel de Ville; for the National Assembly, immediately on the new ministry coming into office, passed a decree, which they communicated to the King and Cabinet, that they (the National Assembly) would hold the ministry, of which Foulon was one, responsible for the measures they were advising and pursuing; but the mob, incensed at the appearance of Foulon and Berthier, tore them from their conductors before they were carried to the Hotel de Ville, and executed them on the spot. Why then does Mr. Burke charge outrages of this kind on a whole people? As well may he charge the riots and outrages of 1780 on all the people of London, or those in Ireland on all his countrymen.

But every thing we see or hear offensive to our feelings, and derogatory to the human character, should lead to other reflections than those of reproach. Even the beings who commit them have some claim to our consideration. How then is it that such vast classes of mankind as are distinguished by the appellation of the vulgar, or the ignorant mob, are so numerous in all old countries? The instant we ask ourselves this question, reflection feels an answer. They arise, as an unavoidable consequence, out of the ill construction of all old governments in Europe, England included with the rest. It is by distortedly exalting some men, that others are distortedly debased, till the whole is out of nature. A vast mass of mankind are degradedly thrown into the back-ground of the human picture, to bring forward with greater glare, the puppet-show of state and aristocracy. In the commencement of a Revolution, those men are rather the followers of the *camp* than of the *standard* of liberty, and have yet to be instructed how to reverence it.

I give to Mr. Burke all his theatrical exaggerations for facts, and I then ask him, if they do not establish the certainty of what I here lay down? Ad-

mitting them to be true, they ſhew the neceſſity of the French Revolution, as much as any one thing he could have aſſerted. Theſe outrages were not the effect of the principles of the Revolution, but of the degraded mind that exiſted before the Revolution, and which the Revolution is calculated to reform. Place them then to their proper cauſe, and take the reproach of them to your own ſide.

It is to the honour of the National Aſſembly, and the city of Paris, that during ſuch a tremendous ſcene of arms and confuſion, beyond the controul of all authority, they have been able, by the influence of example and exhortation, to reſtrain ſo much. Never were more pains taken to inſtruct and enlighten mankind, and to make them ſee that their intereſt conſiſted in their virtue, and not in their revenge, than have been diſplayed in the Revolution of France. I now proceed to make ſome remarks on Mr. Burke's account of the expedition to Verſailles, Oct. the 5th and 6th.

I cannot conſider Mr. Burke's book in ſcarcely any other light than a dramatic performance; and he muſt, I think, have conſidered it in the ſame light himſelf, by the poetical liberties he has taken of omitting ſome facts, and diſtorting others, and making the whole machinery bend to produce a ſtage effect. Of this kind is his account of the expedition to Verſailles. He begins this account by omitting the only facts which as cauſes are known to be true; every thing beyond theſe is conjecture even in Paris; and he then works up a tale accomodated to his own paſſions and prejudices.

It is to be obſerved throughout Mr. Burke's book, that he never ſpeaks of plots *againſt* the Revolution; and it is from theſe plots that all the miſchiefs have ariſen. It ſuits his purpoſe to exhibit the conſequences without their cauſes. It is one of the arts of the drama to do ſo. If the crimes of men were exhibited with their ſufferings, ſtage effect would ſometimes be loſt, and the audience would be inclined to approve where it was intended they ſhould commiſerate.

After all the inveſtigations that have been made into this intricate affair, (the expedition to Verſailles,) it ſtill remains inveloped in all that kind of myſtery which ever accompanies events produced more from a concurrence of awkward circumſtances, than from fixed deſign. While the characters of men are forming, as is always the caſe in Revolutions, there is a reciprocal ſuſpicion and a diſpoſition to miſinterpret each other; and even parties directly oppoſite in principle, will ſometimes concur in puſhing forward the ſame movement with very different views, and with the hopes of its producing very different conſequences. A great deal of this may be diſcovered in this embaraſſed affair, and yet the iſſue of the whole was what nobody had in view.

The only things certainly known, are, that conſiderable uneaſineſs was at this time excited at Paris, by the delay of the King in not ſanctioning and forwarding the decrees of the National Aſſembly, particularly that of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, and the decrees of the *fourth of Auguſt*, which contained the foundation principles on which the conſtitution was to be erected. The kindeſt, and perhaps the fairſt conjecture upon this matter is, that ſome of the miniſters intended to make remarks and obſervations upon certain parts of them, before they were finally ſanctioned and ſent to the provinces; but be this as it may, the enemies of the revolution derived hope from the delay, and the friends of the revolution, uneaſineſs.

During this ſtate of ſuſpence, the *Garde du Corps*, which was compoſed, as ſuch regiments generally are, of perſons much connected with the Court, gave an entertainment at Verſailles, (Oct. 1,) to ſome foreign regiments then

arrived; and when the entertainment was at the height, on a ſignal given, the *Garde du Corps* tore the national cockade from their hats, trampled it under foot, and replaced it with a counter cockade prepared for the purpoſe. An indignity of this kind amounted to defiance. It was like declaring war; and if men will give challenges, they muſt expect conſequences. But all this Mr. Burke has carefully kept out of ſight. He begins his account by ſaying, "Hiſtory will record, that on the morning of the 6th of Oct. 1789, the "King and Queen of France, after a day of confuſion, alarm, diſmay, and "ſlaughter, lay down under the pledged ſecurity of public faith, to indulge "nature in a few hours of reſpite, and troubled melancholy repoſe" This is neither the ſober ſtile of hiſtory, nor the intention of it. It leaves every thing to be gueſſed at, and miſtaken. One would at leaſt think there had been a battle; and a battle there probably would have been, had it not been for the moderating prudence of thoſe whom Mr. Burke involves in his cenſures. By his keeping the *Garde du Corps* out of ſight, Mr. Burke has afforded himſelf the dramatic licence of putting the King and Queen in their places, as if the object of the expedition was againſt them —But, to return to my account—

This conduct of the *Garde du Corps*, as might well be expected, alarmed and enraged the Pariſians. The colours of the cauſe, and the cauſe itſelf, were become too united to miſtake the intention of the inſult, and the Pariſians were determined to call the *Garde du Corps*, to an account. There was certainly nothing of the cowardice of aſſaſſination in marching in the face of day to demand ſatisfaction, if ſuch a phraſe may be uſed, of a body of armed men who had voluntarily given defiance. But the circumſtance which ſerves to throw this affair into embarraſſment is, that the enemies of the revolution appear to have encouraged it, as well as its friends. The one hoped to prevent a civil war by checking it in time, and the other to make one. The hopes of thoſe oppoſed to the revolution, reſted in making the King of their party, and getting him from Verſailles to Metz, where they expected to collect a force, and ſet up a ſtandard. We have, therefore, two different objects preſenting themſelves at the ſame time, and to be accompliſhed by the ſame means: The one to chaſtiſe the *Garde du Corps*, which was the object of the Pariſians; the other, to render the confuſion of ſuch a ſcene an inducement to the King to ſet off for Metz.

On the 5th of October, a very numerous body of women, and men in the diſguiſe of women, collected round the Hotel de Ville or town-hall at Paris, and ſet off for Verſailles. Their profeſſed object was the *Garde du Corps*; but prudent men readily recollect that miſchief is more eaſily begun than ended; and this impreſſed itſelf with the more force, from the ſuſpicions already ſtated, and the irregularity of ſuch a cavalcade. As ſoon, therefore, as a ſufficient force could be collected, M. de la Fayette, by orders from the civil authority of Paris, ſet off after them at the head of twenty thouſand of the Paris militia. The revolution could derive no benefit from confuſion, and its oppoſers might. By an amiable and ſpirited manner of addreſs, he had hitherto been fortunate in calming diſquietudes, and in this he was extraordinarily ſucceſsful; to fruſtrate, therefore, the hopes of thoſe who might ſeek to improve this ſcene into a ſort of juſtifiable neceſſity for the King's quitting Verſailles and withdrawing to Metz, and to prevent at the ſame time the conſequences that might enſue between the *Garde du Corps* and this phalanx of men and women, he forwarded expreſſes to the king that he was on his march to Verſailles, by the orders of the civil authority of Paris, for the purpoſe of peace and protection expreſſing

preſſing at the ſame time the neceſſity of reſtraining the *Garde du Corps* from firing upon the people *.

He arrived at Verſailles between ten and eleven at night. The *Garde du Corps* was drawn up, and the people had arrived ſome time before, but every thing had remained ſuſpended. Wiſdom and policy now conſiſted in changing a ſcene of danger into a happy event. M. de la Fayette became the mediator between the enraged parties; and the King, to remove the uneaſineſs which had ariſen from the delay already ſtated, ſent for the Preſident of the National Aſſembly, and ſigned the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, and ſuch other parts of the conſtitution as were in readineſs.

It was now about one in the morning. Every thing appeared to be compoſed, and a general congratulation took place. By the beat of drum a proclamation was made, that the citizens of Verſailles would give the hoſpitality of their houſes to their fellow citizens of Paris. Thoſe who could not be accommodated in this manner, remained in the ſtreets, or took up their quarters in the churches; and at two o'clock the King and Queen retired.

In this ſtate matters paſſed till the break of day, when a freſh diſturbance aroſe from the cenſurable conduct of ſome of both parties, for ſuch characters there will be in all ſuch ſcenes. One of the *Garde du Corps* appeared at one of the windows of the palace, and the people who had remained during the night in the ſtreets, accoſted him with reviling and provocative language. Inſtead of retiring, as in ſuch a caſe prudence would have dictated, he preſented his muſket, fired, and killed one of the Paris militia. The peace being thus broken, the people ruſhed into the palace in queſt of the offender. They attacked the quarters of the *Garde du Corps* within the palace, and purſued them throughout the avenues of it, and to the apartments of the King. On this tumult, not the Queen only, as Mr. Burke has repreſented it, but every perſon in the palace, was awakened and alarmed; and M. de la Fayette had a ſecond time to interpoſe between the parties, the event of which was, that the *Garde du Corps* put on the national cockade, and the matter ended as by oblivion, after the loſs of two or three lives.

During the latter part of the time in which this confuſion was acting, the King and Queen were in public at the balcony, and neither of them concealed for ſafety's ſake, as Mr. Burke inſinuates. Matters being thus appeaſed, and tranquillity reſtored, a general acclamation broke forth. of *Le Roi à Paris—Le Roi à Paris*—The King to Paris. It was the ſhout of peace, and immediately accepted on the part of the King. By this meaſure, all future projects of trapanning the King to Metz, and ſetting up the ſtandard of oppoſition, to the conſtitution, were prevented, and the ſuſpicions extinguiſhed. The King and his family reached Paris in the evening, and were congratulated on their arrival by M. Bailley the Mayor of Paris, in the name of the citizens. Mr. Burke, who throughout his book confounds things, perſons, and principles, has in his remarks on M. Bailley's addreſs, confounded time alſo. He cenſures M. Bailley for calling it, "*un bon jour*," a good day. Mr. Burke ſhould have informed himſelf, that this ſcene took up the ſpace of two days, the day on which it

* *I am warranted in aſſerting this, as I had it perſonally from M. de la Fayette, with whom I have lived in habits of friendſhip for fourteen years.*

began

began with every appearance of danger and miſchief, and the day on which it terminated without the miſchiefs that threatened; and that it is to this peaceful termination that M. Bailley alludes, and to the arrival of the King at Paris. Not leſs than three hundred thouſand perſons arranged themſelves in the proceſſion from Verſailles to Paris, and not an act of moleſtation was committed during the whole march.

Mr. Burke, on the authority of M. Lally Tollendal, a deſerter from the National Aſſembly, ſays, that on entering Paris, the people ſhouted, "*Tous les eveques à la lanterne.*" All Biſhops to be hanged at the lanthorn or lamp-poſts.—It is ſurpriſing that nobody could hear this but Lally Tollendal, and that nobody ſhould believe it but Mr. Burke. It has not the leaſt connection with any part of the tranſaction, and is totally foreign to every circumſtance of it. The biſhops had never been introduced before into any ſcene of Mr. Burke's drama; Why then are they, all at once and altogether, *tout à coup et tout enſemble*, introduced now? Mr. Burke brings forward his biſhops and his lanthorn-like figures in a magic lanthorn, and raiſes his ſcenes by contraſt inſtead of connection. But it ſerves to ſhew, with the reſt of his book, what credit ought to be given, where even probability is ſet at defiance, for the purpoſe of defaming; and with this reflection, inſtead of a ſoliloquy in praiſe of chivalry, as Mr. Burke has done, I cloſe the account of the expedition to Verſailles *.

I have now to follow Mr. Burke through a pathleſs wilderneſs of rhapſodies, and a ſort of deſcant upon governments, in which he aſſerts whatever he pleaſes, on the preſumption of its being believed, without offering either evidence or reaſons for ſo doing.

Before any thing can be reaſoned upon to a concluſion, certain facts, principles, or data, to reaſon from, muſt be eſtabliſhed, admitted or denied. Mr. Burke, with his uſual outrage, abuſes the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, publiſhed by the National Aſſembly of France as the baſis on which the conſtitution of France is built. This he calls "paltry and blurred ſheets of paper about the rights of man."—Does Mr. Burke mean to deny that *man* has any rights? If he does, then he muſt mean that there are no ſuch things as rights any where, and that he has none himſelf; for who is there in the world but man? But if Mr. Burke means to admit that man has rights, the queſtion then will be, What are thoſe rights, and how came man by them originally?

The error of thoſe who reaſon by precedents drawn from antiquity, reſpecting the rights of man, is, that they do not go far enough into antiquity. They do not go the whole way. They ſtop in ſome of the intermediate ſtages of an hundred or a thouſand years, and produce what was then done, as a rule for the preſent day. This is no authority at all. If we travel ſtill farther into antiquity, we ſhall find a direct contrary opinion and practice prevailing; and if antiquity is to be authority, a thouſand ſuch authorities may be produced, ſucceſſively contradicting each other. But if we proceed on, we ſhall at laſt come out right; we ſhall come to the time when man came from the hand of his Maker. What was he then? Man. Man was his high and only title, and a higher cannot be given him.——But of titles I ſhall ſpeak hereafter.

We are now got at the origin of man, and at the origin of his rights. As to the manner in which the world has been governed from that day to

* *An account of the expedition to Verſailles may be ſeen in* No. 13. *of the* Revolution de Paris, *containing the events from the 3d to the 10th of October*, 1789.

this, it is no farther any concern of ours than to make a proper uſe of the errors or the improvements which the hiſtory of it preſents. Thoſe who lived a hundred or a thouſand years ago, were then moderns, as we are now. They had *their* ancients, and thoſe ancients had others, and we alſo ſhall be ancients in our turn. If the mere name of antiquity is to govern in the affairs of life, the people who are to live an hundred or a thouſand years hence, may as well take us for a precedent, as we make a precedent of thoſe who lived a hundred or a thouſand years ago. The fact is, that portions of antiquity, may, by proving every thing, eſtabliſh nothing. It is authority againſt authority all the way, till we come to the divine origin of the rights of man at the creation. Here our enquiries find a reſting-place, and our reaſon finds a home. If a diſpute about the rights of man had ariſen at the diſtance of an hundred years from the creation, it is to this ſource of authority they muſt have referred, and it is to the ſame ſource of authority that we muſt now refer.

Though I mean not to touch upon any ſectarian principle of religion, yet it may be worth obſerving, that the genealogy of Chriſt is traced to Adam. Why then not trace the rights of man to the creation of man? I will anſwer the queſtion. Becauſe there have been upſtart governments, thruſting themſelves between, and preſumptuouſly working to *un-make* man.

If any generation of men ever poſſeſſed the right of dictating the mode by which the world ſhould be governed for ever, it was the firſt generation that exiſted; and if that generation did it not, no ſucceeding generation can ſhew any authority for doing it, nor can ſet any up. The illuminating and divine principle of the equal rights of man, (for it has its origin from the Maker of man) relates not only to the living individuals, but to generations of men ſucceeding each other. Every generation is equal in rights to the generations which preceeded it, by the ſame rule that every individual is born equal in rights with his contemporary.

Every hiſtory of the creation, and every traditionary account, whether from the lettered or unlettered world, however they may vary in their opinion or belief of certain particulars, all agree in eſtabliſhing one point, *the unity of man*; by which I mean, that men are all of *one degree*, and conſequently that all men are born equal, and with equal natural right, in the ſame manner as if poſterity had been continued by *creation* inſtead of *generation*, the latter being only the mode by which the former is carried forward; and conſequently, every child born into the world muſt be conſidered as deriving its exiſtence from God. The world is as new to him as it was to the firſt man that exiſted, and his natural right in it of the ſame kind.

The Moſaic account of the creation, whether taken as divine authority, or merely hiſtorical, is full to this point, *the unity or equality of man*. The expreſſions admit of no controverſy. "And God ſaid, Let us make man in our "own image. In the image of God created he him; male and female cre-"ated he them." The diſtinction of ſexes is pointed out, but no other diſtinction is even implied. If this be not divine authority, it is at leaſt hiſtorical authority, and ſhews that the equality of man, ſo far from being a modern doctrine, is the oldeſt upon record.

It is alſo to be obſerved, that all the religions known in the world are founded, ſo far as they relate to man, on the *unity of man*, as being all of one degree. Whether in heaven or in hell, or in whatever ſtate man may be ſuppoſed to exiſt hereafter, the good and the bad are the only diſtinctions. Nay, even the laws of governments are obliged to ſlide into this principle, by making degrees to conſiſt in crimes, and not in perſons.

It

It is one of the greateſt of all truths, and of the higheſt advantage to cultivate. By conſidering man in this light, and by inſtructing him to conſider himſelf in this light, it places him in a cloſe connection with all his duties, whether to his Creator, or to the creation, of which he is a part; and it is only when he forgets his origin, or, to uſe a more faſhionable phraſe, his *birth and family*, that he becomes diſſolute. It is not among the leaſt of the evils of the preſent exiſting governments in all parts of Europe, that man, conſidered as man, is thrown back to a vaſt diſtance from his Maker, and the artificial chaſm filled up by a ſucceſſion of barriers, or ſort of turnpike-gates, through which he has to paſs. I will quote Mr. Burke's catalogue of barriers that he has ſet up between man and his Maker. Putting himſelf in the character of a herald, he ſays,—"We fear God—we look with *awe* to "kings—with affection to parliaments—with duty to magiſtrates—with re-"verence to prieſts, and with reſpect to nobility." Mr. Burke has forgotten to put in "*chivalry*." He has alſo forgotten to put in Peter.

The duty of man is not a wilderneſs of turnpike-gates, through which he is to paſs by tickets from one to the other. It is plain and ſimple, and conſiſts but of two points. His duty to God, which every man muſt feel; and with reſpect to his neighbour, to do as he would be done by. If thoſe to whom power is delegated do well, they will be reſpected; if not, they will be deſpiſed; and with regard to thoſe to whom no power is delegated, but who aſſume it, the rational world can know nothing of them.

Hitherto we have ſpoken only (and that but in part) of the natural rights of man. We have now to conſider the civil rights of man, and to ſhew how the one originates from the other. Man did not enter into ſociety to become *worſe* than he was before, nor to have fewer rights than he had before, but to have thoſe rights better ſecured. His natural rights are the foundation of all his civil rights. But in order to purſue this diſtinction with more preciſion, it will be neceſſary to mark the different qualities of natural and civil rights.

A few words will explain this. Natural rights are thoſe which appertain to man in right of his exiſtence. Of this kind are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind, and alſo all thoſe rights of acting as an individual for his own comfort and happineſs, which are not injurious to the natural rights of others.——Civil rights are thoſe which appertain to man in right of his being a member of ſociety. Every civil right has for its foundation, ſome natural right pre-exiſting in the individual but to the enjoyment of which his individual power is not, in all caſes, ſufficiently competent. Of this kind are all thoſe which relate to ſecurity and protection.

From this ſhort review, it will be eaſy to diſtinguiſh between that claſs of natural rights which man retains after entering into ſociety, and thoſe which he throws into the common ſtock as a member of ſociety.

The natural rights which he retains, are all thoſe in which the *power* to execute is as perfect in the individual as the right itſelf. Among this claſs, as is before-mentioned, are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind: conſequently, religion is one of thoſe rights. The natural rights which are not retained, are all thoſe in which, though the right is perfect in the individual, the power to execute them is defective. They anſwer not this purpoſe. A man, by natural right, has a right to judge in his own cauſe; and ſo far as the right of the mind is concerned, he never ſurrenders it: But what availeth it him to judge, if he has not power to redreſs? He therefore depoſits this right in the common ſtock of ſociety, and takes the arm of ſociety, of which he is a part, in preference and in addition to his own. Society *grants* him

him nothing. Every man is a proprietor in ſociety, and draws on the capital as a matter of right.

From theſe premiſes, two or three certain concluſions will follow.

Firſt, That every civil right grows out of a natural right; or, in other words, is a natural right exchanged.

Secondly, That civil power, properly conſidered as ſuch, is made up of the aggregate of that claſs of the natural rights of man, which becomes defective in the individual in point of power, and anſwers not his purpoſe; but when collected to a focus, becomes competent to the purpoſe of every one.

Thirdly, That the power produced from the aggregate of natural rights, imperfect in power in the individual, cannot be applied to invade the natural rights which are retained in the individual, and in which the power to execute is as perfect as the right itſelf.

We have now, in a few words, traced man from a natural individual to a member of ſociety, and ſhewn, or endeavoured to ſhew, the quality of the natural rights retained, and of thoſe which are exchanged for civil rights. Let us now apply theſe principles to governments.

In caſting our eyes over the world, it is extremely eaſy to diſtinguiſh the governments which have ariſen out of ſociety, or out of the ſocial compact, from thoſe which have not: But to place this in a clearer light than what a ſingle glance may afford, it will be proper to take a review of the ſeveral ſources from which governments have ariſen, and on which they have been founded.

They may all be comprehended under three heads. Firſt, Superſtition. Secondly, Power. Thirdly, The common intereſt of ſociety, and the common rights of man.

The firſt was a government of prieſt-craft, the ſecond of conquerors, and the third of reaſon.

When a ſet of artful men pretended, through the medium of oracles, to hold intercourſe with the Deity, as familiarly as they now march up the back-ſtairs in European courts, the world was completely under the government of ſuperſtition. The oracles were conſulted, and whatever they were made to ſay, became the law; and this ſort of government laſted as long as this ſort of ſuperſtition laſted.

After theſe a race of conquerors aroſe, whoſe government like that of William the Conqueror, was founded in power, and the ſword aſſumed the name of a ſcepter. Governments thus eſtabliſhed, laſt as long as the power to ſupport them laſts; but that they might avail themſelves of every engine in their favour, they united fraud to force, and ſet up an idol which they called *Divine Right*, and which in imitation of the Pope, who affects to be ſpiritual and temporal, and in contradiction to the Founder of the Chriſtian religion, twiſted itſelf afterwards into an idol of another ſhape, called *Church and State*. The key of St. Peter, and the key of the Treaſury, became quartered on one another, and the wondering cheated multitude worſhipped the invention.

When I contemplate the natural dignity of man; when I feel (for Nature has not been kind enough to me to blunt my feelings) for the honour and happineſs of its character, I become irritated at the attempt to govern mankind by force and fraud, as if they were all knaves and fools, and can ſcarcely avoid diſguſt at thoſe who are thus impoſed upon.

We have now to review the governments which ariſe out of ſociety, in contradiſtinction to thoſe which aroſe out of ſuperſtition and conqueſt.

It has been thought a conſiderable advance towards eſtabliſhing the principles of Freedom, to ſay, that government is a compact between thoſe who govern

govern and those who are governed: But this cannot be true, because it is putting the effect before the cause; for as man must have existed before governments existed, there necessarily was a time when governments did not exist, and consequently there could originally exist no governors to form such a compact with. The fact therefore must be, that the *individuals themselves*, each in his own personal and sovereign right *entered into a compact with each other* to produce a government: And this is the only mode in which governments have a right to arise, and the only principle on which they have a right to exist.

To possess ourselves of a clear idea of what government is, or ought to be, we must trace it to its origin. In doing this, we shall easily discover that governments must have arisen, either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. Mr. Burke has made no distinction. He investigates nothing to its source and therefore he confounds every thing: But he has signified his intention of undertaking at some future opportunity, a comparison between the constitutions of England and France. As he thus renders it a subject of controversy by throwing the gauntlet, I take him upon his own ground. It is in high challenges that high truths have the right of appearing; and I accept it with the more readiness, because it affords me, at the same time, an opportunity of pursuing the subject with respect to governments arising out of society.

But it will be first necessary to define what is meant by a *constitution*. It is not sufficient that we adopt the word; we must fix also a standard signification to it.

A constitution is not a thing in name only, but in fact. It has not an ideal, but a real existence; and wherever it cannot be produced in a visible form, there is none. A constitution is a thing *antecedent* to a government, and a government is only the creature of a constitution. The constitution of a country is not the act of its government, but of the people constituting a government. It is the body of elements, to which you can refer, and quote article by article; and which contains the principles on which the government shall be established, the manner in which it shall be organized, the power it shall have, the mode of elections, the duration of parliaments, or by what other name such bodies may be called; the powers which the executive part of the government shall have; and, in fine, every thing that relates to the compleat organization of a civil government, and the principles on which it shall act, and by which it shall be bound. A constitution, therefore, is to a government, what the laws made afterwards by that government are to a court of judicature. The court of judicature does not make the laws, neither can it alter them; it only acts in conformity to the laws made: And the government is in like manner governed by the constitution.

Can then Mr. Burke produce the English Constitution? If he cannot, we may fairly conclude, that though it has been so much talked about, no such thing as a constitution exists, or ever did exist, and consequently that the people have yet a constitution to form.

Mr. Burke will not, I presume, deny the position I have already advanced; namely, that governments arise, either *out* of the people, or *over* the people. The English government is one of those which arose out of a conquest, and not out of society, and consequently it arose over the people; and though it has been much modified from the opportunity of circumstances since the time of William the Conqueror, the country has never yet regenerated itself, and is therefore without a constitution.

I readily perceive the reason why Mr. Burke declined going into the comparison between the English and French constitutions, because he could not but perceive, when he sat down to the task, that no such thing as a constitu-

tion exiſted on his ſide the queſtion. His book is certainly bulky enough to have contained all he could ſay on the ſubject, and it would have been the beſt manner in which people could have judged of their ſeparate merits. Why then has he declined the only thing that was worth while to write upon? It was the ſtrongeſt ground he could take if the advantages were on his ſide; but the weakeſt, if they were not; and his declining to take it, is either a ſign that he could not poſſeſs it, or could not maintain it.

Mr. Burke ſaid in a ſpeech laſt winter in parliament, That when the National Aſſembly firſt met in three Orders, (the Tiers Etats, the Clergy, and the Nobleſſe,) France had then a good conſtitution. This ſhews, among numerous other inſtances, that Mr. Burke does not underſtand what a conſtitution is The perſons ſo met, were not a *conſtitution*, but a *convention*, to make a conſtitution.

The preſent National Aſſembly of France is, ſtrictly ſpeaking, the perſonal ſocial compact.—The members of it are the delegates of the nation in its *original* character; future aſſemblies will be the delegates of the nation in its *organized* character. The authority of the preſent Aſſembly is different to what the authority of future Aſſemblies will be. The authority of the preſent one is to form a conſtitution: The authority of future Aſſemblies will be to legiſlate according to the principles and forms preſcribed in that conſtitution; and if experience ſhould hereafter ſhew that alterations, amendments, or additions, are neceſſary, the conſtitution will point out the mode by which ſuch things ſhall be done, and not leave it to the diſcretionary power of the future government.

A government on the principles on which conſtitutional governments ariſing out of ſociety are eſtabliſhed, cannot have the right of altering itſelf. If it had, it would be arbitrary. It might make itſelf what it pleaſed; and wherever ſuch a right is ſet up, it ſhews there is no conſtitution. The act by which the Engliſh Parliament empowered itſelf to ſit ſeven years, ſhews there is no conſtitution in England. It might, by the ſame ſelf-authority, have ſat any greater number of years, or for life. The bill which the preſent Mr. Pitt brought into parliament ſome years ago, to reform parliament, was on the ſame erroneous principle. The right of reform is in the nation in its original character, and the conſtitutional method would be by a general convention elected for the purpoſe. There is, moreover, a paradox in the idea of vitiated bodies reforming themſelves.

From theſe preliminaries I proceed to draw ſome compariſons. I have already ſpoken of the declaration of rights; and as I mean to be as conciſe as poſſible, I ſhall proceed to other parts of the French conſtitution.

The conſtitution of France ſays, That every man who pays a tax of ſixty ſous *per annum*, (2s. and 6d. Engliſh), is an elector.—What article will Mr. Burke place againſt this? Can any thing be more limited, and at the ſame time more capricious, than the qualifications of Electors are in England? Limited—becauſe not one man in an hundred (I ſpeak much within compaſs) is admitted to vote: Capricious—becauſe the loweſt character that can be ſuppoſed to exiſt, and who has not ſo much as the viſible means of an honeſt livelihood, is an elector in ſome places; while, in other places, the man who pays very large taxes, and has known a fair character, and the farmer who rents to the amount of three or four hundred pounds a year, with a property on that farm to three or four times that amount, is not admitted to be an elector. Every thing is out of nature, as Mr. Burke ſays on another occaſion, in this ſtrange chaos, and all ſorts of follies are blended with all ſorts of crimes. William the Conqueror and his deſcendants parcelled out the country in this manner, and bribed ſome parts of it, by what they called Char-

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ters, to hold the other parts of it the better ſubjected to their will. This is the reaſon why ſo many of thoſe charters abound in Cornwall; the people were averſe to the government eſtabliſhed at the Conqueſt, and the towns were garriſoned and bribed to enſlave the country. All the old charters are the badges of this conqueſt, and it is from this ſource that the capriciouſneſs of elections ariſes.

The French conſtitution ſays, That the number of repreſentatives for any place ſhall be in a ratio to the number of taxable inhabitants or electors. What article will Mr. Burke place againſt this? The county of Yorkſhire, which contains near a million of ſouls, ſends two county members; and ſo does the county of Rutland, which contains not an hundredth part of that number. The town of old Sarum, which contains not three houſes, ſends two members; and the town of Mancheſter, which contains upwards of ſixty thouſand ſouls, is not admitted to ſend any. Is there any principle in theſe things? Is there any thing by which you can trace the marks of freedom, or diſcover thoſe of wiſdom? No wonder, then, Mr. Burke has declined the compariſon, and endeavoured to lead his readers from the point by a wild unſyſtematical diſplay of paradoxical rhapſodies.

The French conſtitution ſays, That the National Aſſembly ſhall be elected every two years.—What article will Mr. Burke place againſt this? Why, that the nation has no right at all in the caſe: That the government is perfectly arbitrary with reſpect to this point; and he can quote for his authority, the precedent of a former parliament.

The French conſtitution ſays, There ſhall be no game laws; that the farmer on whoſe lands wild game ſhall be found (for it is by the produce of his lands they are fed) ſhall have a right to what he can take: That there ſhall be no monopolies of any kind—that all trade ſhall be free, and every man free to follow any occupation by which he can procure an honeſt livelihood, and in any place, town or city throughout the nation.—What will Mr. Burke ſay to this? In England, game is made the property of thoſe at whoſe expence it is not fed, and with reſpect to monopolies, the country is cut up into monopolies Every chartered town is an ariſtocratical monopoly in itſelf, and the qualification of electors proceeds out of thoſe chartered monopolies. Is this freedom? Is this what Mr. Burke means by a conſtitution?

In theſe chartered monopolies, a man coming from another part of the country, is hunted from them as if he were a foreign enemy. An Engliſhman is not free of his own country: Every one of thoſe places preſents a barrier in his way, and tells him he is not a freeman—that he has no rights. Within theſe monopolies are other monopolies. In a city, ſuch for inſtance as Bath, which contains between twenty and thirty thouſand inhabitants, the right of electing repreſentatives to parliament is monopoliſed by about thirty-one perſons. And within theſe monopolies are ſtill others. A man even of the ſame town, whoſe parents were not in circumſtances to give him an occupation, is debarred, in many caſes, from the natural right of acquiring one, be his genius or induſtry what it may.

Are theſe things examples to hold out to a country regenerating itſelf from ſlavery, like France?—Certainly they are not; and certain am I, that when the people of England come to reflect upon them, they will, like France, annihilate thoſe badges of ancient oppreſſion, thoſe traces of a conquered nation.—Had Mr. Burke poſſeſſed talents ſimilar to the author "On the Wealth of Nations," he would have comprehended all the parts which enter into, and, by aſſemblage, form a conſtitution. He would have reaſon-

ed from minutiæ to magnitude. It is not from his prejudices only, but from the disorderly cast of his genius, that he is unfitted for the subject he writes upon. Even his genius is without a constitution. It is a genius at random, and not a genius constituted. But he must say something—He has therefore mounted in the air like a balloon, to draw the eyes of the multitude from the ground they stand upon.

Much is to be learned from the French constitution. Conquest and tyranny transplanted themselves with William the Conqueror from Normandy into England, and the country is yet disfigured with the marks. May then the example of all France contribute to regenerate the freedom which a province of it destroyed!

The French constitution says, That to preserve the national representation from being corrupt, no member of the National Assembly shall be an officer of the government, a place-man, or a pensioner.—What will Mr. Burke place against this? I will whisper his answer: *Loaves and fishes.* Ah! this government of loaves and fishes has more mischief in it than people have yet reflected on. The National Assembly has made the discovery, and it holds out the example to the world. Had governments agreed to quarrel on purpose to fleece their countries by taxes, they could not have succeeded better than they have done.

Many things in the English government appear to me the reverse of what they ought to be, and of what they are said to be. The Parliament, imperfectly and capriciously elected as it is, is nevertheless *supposed* to hold the national purse in *trust* for the nation: But in the manner in which an English parliament is constructed, it is like a man being both mortgager and mortgagee; and in the case of misapplication of trust, it is the criminal sitting in judgment upon himself. If those who vote the supplies are the same persons who receive the supplies when voted, and are to account for the expenditure of those supplies to those who voted them, it is *themselves accountable to themselves*, and the Comedy of Errors concludes with the Pantomime of Hush. Neither the ministerial party, nor the opposition, will touch upon this case. The national purse is the common back which each mounts upon. It is like what the country people call, "Ride and tie—You ride a little way, and then I."—They order these things better in France.

The French constitution says, That the right of war and peace is in the nation. Where else should it reside, but in those who are to pay the expence?

In England, this right is said to reside in a *metaphor*, shewn at the tower for six-pence or a shilling a-piece: So are the lions; and it would be a step nearer to reason to say it resided in them, for any inanimate metaphor is no more than a hat or a cap. We can all see the absurdity of worshipping Aaron's molten calf, or Nebuchadnezzar's golden image; but why do men continue to practice themselves the absurdities they despise in others?

It may with reason be said, that in the manner the English nation is represented, it signifies not where this right resides, whether in the Crown or in the parliament. War is the common harvest of all those who participate in the division and expenditure of public money, in all countries. It is the art of *conquering at home*: The object of it is an increase of revenue,

* *It is a practice in some parts of the country, when two travellers have but one horse, which like the national purse will not carry double, that the one mounts and rides two or three miles a head, and then ties the horse to a gate, and walks on. When the second traveller arrives, he takes the horse, rides on, and passes his companion a mile or two, and ties again; and so on*—Ride and tie.

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and as revenue cannot be increaſed without taxes, a pretence muſt be made for expenditures. In reviewing the hiſtory of the Engliſh Government, its wars and its taxes, a by-ſtander, not blinded by prejudice, nor warped by intereſt, would declare, that taxes were not raiſed to carry on wars, but that wars were raiſed to carry on taxes.

Mr. Burke, as a member of the Houſe of Commons, is a part of the Engliſh Government; and though he profeſſes himſelf an enemy to war he abuſes the French Conſtitution, which ſeeks to explode it. He holds up the Engliſh Government as a model in all its parts, to France; but he ſhould firſt know the remarks which the French make upon it. They contend, in favour of their own, that the portion of liberty enjoyed in England, is juſt enough to enſlave a country by, more productively than by deſpotiſm; and that as the real object of all deſpotiſm is revenue, a government ſo formed obtains more than it could do either by direct deſpotiſm, or in a full ſtate of freedom, and is therefore, on the ground of intereſt, oppoſed to both. They account alſo for the readineſs which always appears in ſuch governments for engaging in wars, by remarking on the different motives which produce them. In deſpotic governments, wars are the effect of pride; but in thoſe governments in which they become the means of taxation, they acquire thereby a more permanent promptitude.

The French Conſtitution, therefore, to provide againſt both theſe evils, has taken away the power of declaring war from kings and miniſters, and placed the right where the expence muſt fall.

When the queſtion on the right of war and peace was agitating in the National Aſſembly, the people of England appeared to be much intereſted in the event, and highly to applaud the deciſion.—As a principle, it applies as much to one country as to another. William the Conqueror, *as a conqueror* held this power of war and peace in himſelf, and his deſcendants have ever ſince claimed it under him as a right.

Although Mr. Burke has aſſerted the right of the parliament at the Revolution to bind and controul the nation and poſterity for *ever*, he denies at the ſame time, that the parliament or the nation had any right to alter what he calls the ſucceſſion of the crown, in any thing but in part, or by a ſort of modification. By his taking this ground, he throws the caſe back to the *Norman Conqueſt*; and by thus running a line of ſucceſſion ſpringing from William the Conqueror to the preſent day, he makes it neceſſary to enquire who and what William the Conqueror was, and where he came from; and into the origin, hiſtory, and nature of what are called prerogatives. Every thing muſt have had a beginning, and the fog of time and antiquity ſhould be penetrated to diſcover it. Let then Mr. Burke bring forward his William of Normandy; for it is to this origin that this argument goes. It alſo unfortunately happens, in running this line of ſucceſſion, that another line, parallel thereto, preſents itſelf, which is, that if the ſucceſſion runs in the line of the conqueſt, the nation runs in the line of being conquered, and it ought to reſcue itſelf from this reproach.

But it will perhaps be ſaid, that though the power of declaring war deſcends in the heritage of the conqueſt, it is held in check by the right of the parliament to with-hold the ſupplies. It will always happen, when a thing is originally wrong, that amendments do not make it right; and it often happens, that they do as much miſchief one way, as good the other: And ſuch is the caſe here; for if the one raſhly declares war as a matter of right, and the other peremptorily with-holds the ſupplies as a matter of right the remedy becomes as bad, or worſe than the diſeaſe. The one for-

ces the nation to a combat, and the other ties its hands: But the more probable iſſue is, that the conteſt will end in a colluſion between the parties, and be made a ſcreen to both.

On this queſtion of war, three things are to be conſidered. Firſt, the right of declaring it: Secondly, the expence of ſupporting it: Thirdly, the mode of conducting it after it is declared. The French conſtitution places the *right* where the *expence* muſt fall, and this union can be only in the nation, The mode of conducting it after it is declared, it conſigns to the executive department.—Were this the caſe in all countries, we ſhould hear but little more of wars.

Before I proceed to conſider other parts of the French Conſtitution, and by way of relieving the fatigue of argument, I will introduce an anecdote which I had from Dr. Franklin.——

While the doctor reſided in France as miniſter from America during the war, he had numerous propoſals made to him by projectors of every country and of every kind, who wiſhed to go to the land that floweth with milk and honey, America; and among the reſt, there was one who offered himſelf to be king. He introduced his propoſal to the doctor by letter, which is now in the hands of M. Beaumarchais, of Paris—ſtating, firſt, that as the Americans had diſmiſſed or ſent away* their King, that they would want another. Secondly, that himſelf was a Norman. Thirdly, that he was of a more ancient family than the Dukes of Normandy, and of a more honourable deſcent, his line having never been baſtardized. Fourthly, that there was already a precedent in England, of Kings coming out of Normandy: And on theſe grounds he reſted his offer, *enjoining*, that the doctor would forward it to America. But as the Doctor neither did this, nor yet ſent him an anſwer, the projector wrote a ſecond letter; in which he did not, it is true, threaten to go over and conquer America, but only with great dignity propoſed, that if his offer was not accepted, an acknowledgment of about £30,000 might be made to him for his generoſity!———Now, as all arguments reſpecting ſucceſſion muſt neceſſarily connect that ſucceſſion with ſome beginning, Mr. Burke's arguments on this ſubject go to ſhew, that there is no Engliſh origin of kings, and that they are deſcendants of the Norman line in right of the Conqueſt. It may, therefore, be of ſervice to his doctrine to make this ſtory known, and to inform him, that in caſe of that natural extinction to which all mortality is ſubject, Kings may again be had from Normandy, on more reaſonable terms than William the Conqueror; and conſequently, that the good people of England, at the Revolution of 1688, *might have done much better* had ſuch a generous Norman as *this* known *their* wants, and they had known *his*. The chivalry character which Mr. Burke ſo much admires, is certainly much eaſier to make a bargain with, than a *hard-dealing Dutchman*.——But, to return to the matters of the conſtitution—

The French conſtitution ſays, *There ſhall be no titles*; and of conſequence, all that claſs of equivocal generation, which in ſome countries is called "*ariſtocracy*," and in others "*nobility*," is done away, and the *peer* is exalted into MAN.

Titles are but nick-names, and every nick-name is a title. The thing is perfectly harmleſs in itſelf; but it marks a ſort of foppery in the human character, which degrades it. It reduces man into the diminutive of man in things which are great, and the counterfeit of woman in things which are little. It talks about its fine *blue ribbon* like a girl, and ſhews its new

* *The word he uſed was* renvoyé, *diſmiſſed or ſent away.*

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garter like a child. A certain writer of ſome antiquity ſays, "When I "was a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put "away childiſh things."

It is, properly, from the elevated mind of France, that the folly of titles has fallen. It has outgrown the baby-cloaths of *Count* and *Duke*, and breeched itſelf in manhood. France has not levelled; it has exalted. It has put down the dwarf, to ſet up the man. The punyiſm of a ſenſeleſs word like *Duke*, or *Count*, or *Earl*, has ceaſed to pleaſe. Even thoſe who poſſeſſed them have diſowned the gibberiſh, and as they outgrew the rickets, have deſpiſed the rattle. The genuine mind of man, thirſting for its native home, ſociety, contemns the gewgaws that ſeparate him from it. Titles are like circles drawn by the magician's wand to contract the ſphere of man's felicity. He lives immured within the Baſtille of a word, and ſurveys at a diſtance the envied life of man.

Is it then any wonder that titles ſhould fall in France? Is it not a greater wonder they ſhould be kept up any where? What are they? What is their worth, and "what is their amount? When we think or ſpeak of a *Judge* or a *General*, we aſſociate with it the ideas of office and character; we think of gravity in the one, and bravery in the other: But when we uſe a word *merely as a title*, no ideas aſſociate with it. Through all the vocabulary of Adam, there is not ſuch an animal as a Duke or a Count, neither can we connect any certain idea with the words. Whether they mean ſtrength or weakneſs, wiſdom or folly, a child or a man, or the rider or the horſe, is all equivocal. What reſpect then can be paid to that which deſcribes nothing, and which means nothing? Imagination has given figure and character to centaurs, ſatyrs, and down to all the fairy tribe; but titles baffle even the powers of fancy, and are a chimerical non-deſcript.

But this is not all.—If a whole country is diſpoſed to hold them in contempt, all their value is gone, and none will own them. It is common opinion only that makes them any thing, or nothing, or worſe than nothing. There is no occaſion to take titles away, for they take themſelves away when ſociety concurs to ridicule them. This ſpecies of imaginary conſequence has viſibly declined in every part of Europe, and it haſtens to its exit as the world of reaſon continues to riſe. There was a time when the loweſt claſs of what are called nobility was more thought of than the higheſt is now, and when a man in armour riding throughout Chriſtendom in queſt of adventures was more ſtared at than a modern Duke. The world has ſeen this folly fall, and it has fallen by being laughed at, and the farce of titles will follow its fate. The patriots of France have diſcovered in good time, that rank and dignity in ſociety muſt take a new ground. The old one has fallen through. It muſt now take the ſubſtantial ground of character, inſtead of the chimerical ground of titles; and they have brought their titles to the altar, and made of them a burnt-offering to Reaſon.

If no miſchief had annexed itſelf to the folly of titles, they would not have been worth a ſerious and formal deſtruction, ſuch as the National Aſſembly have decreed them: And this makes it neceſſary to enquire farther into the nature and character of ariſtocracy.

That, then, which is called ariſtocracy in ſome countries, and nobility in others, aroſe out of the governments founded upon conqueſt. It was originally a military order, for the purpoſe of ſupporting military government, (for ſuch were all governments founded in conqueſt;) and to keep

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up a ſucceſſion of this order for the purpoſe for which it was eſtabliſhed, all the younger branches of thoſe families were diſinherited, and the law of *primogeniture ſhip* ſet up.

The nature and character of ariſtocracy ſhews itſelf to us in this law. It is a law againſt every law of nature, and Nature herſelf calls for its deſtruction. Eſtabliſh family juſtice, and ariſtocracy falls. By the ariſtocratical law of primogeniture ſhip, in a family of ſix children, five are expoſed. Ariſtocracy has never more than *one* child. The reſt are begotten to be devoured. They are thrown to the cannibal for prey, and the unnatural parent prepares the unnatural repaſt.

As every thing which is out of nature in man, affects, more or leſs, the intereſt of ſociety, ſo does this. All the children which the ariſtocracy diſowns (which are all except the eldeſt) are, in general, caſt like orphans on a pariſh, to be provided for by the public, but at a greater charge. —Unneceſſary offices and places in governments and courts are created at the expence of the public, to maintain them.

With what kind of parental reflections can the father or mother contemplate their younger offſpring. By nature they are children, and by marriage they are heirs; but by ariſtocracy they are baſtards and orphans. They are the fleſh and blood of their parents in one line, and nothing akin to them in the other. To reſtore, therefore, parents to their children, and children to their parents—relations to each other, and man to ſociety—and to exterminate the monſter Ariſtocracy, root and branch—the French Conſtitution has deſtroyed the law of PRIMOGENITURESHIP. Here then lies the monſter; and Mr. Burke, if he pleaſes, may write its epitaph.

Hitherto we have conſidered ariſtocracy chiefly in one point of view. We have now to conſider it in another. But whether we view it before or behind, or ſide-ways, or any way elſe, domeſtically or publicly, it is ſtill a monſter.

In France, ariſtocracy had one feature leſs in its countenance than what it has in ſome other countries. It did not compoſe a body of hereditary legiſlators. It was not "*a corporation of ariſtocracy*," for ſuch I have heard M. de la Fayette deſcribe an Engliſh Houſe of Peers. Let us then examine the grounds upon which the French Conſtitution has reſolved againſt having ſuch a Houſe in France.

Becauſe, in the firſt place, as is already mentioned, ariſtocracy is kept up by family tyranny and injuſtice.

Secondly, Becauſe there is an unnatural unfitneſs in an ariſtocracy to be legiſlators for a nation. Their ideas of *diſtributive juſtice* are corrupted at every ſource. They begin life by trampling on all their younger brothers and ſiſters, and relations of every kind, and are taught and educated ſo to do. With what ideas of juſtice or honour can that man enter a houſe of legiſlation, who abſorbs in his own perſon the inheritance of a whole family of children, or doles out to them ſome pitiful portion with the inſolence of a gift?

Thirdly, Becauſe the idea of hereditary legiſlators is as inconſiſtent as that of hereditary judges, or hereditary juries; and as abſurd as an hereditary mathematician, or an hereditary wiſe man; and as ridiculous as an hereditary poet-laureat.

Fourthly, Becauſe a body of men holding themſelves accountable to nobody, ought not to be truſted by any body.

Fifthly, Becauſe it is continuing the uncivilized principle of governments founded on conqueſt, and the baſe idea of man having property in man, and governing him by perſonal right.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, Becauſe ariſtocracy has a tendency to degenerate the human ſpecies.—By the univerſal œconomy of nature it is known, and by the inſtance of the Jews it it proved, that the human ſpecies has a tendency to degenerate, in any ſmall number of perſons, when ſeparated from the general ſtock of ſociety, and intermarrying conſtantly with each other. It defeats even its pretended end, and becomes in time the oppoſite of what is noble in man. Mr. Burke talks of nobility; let him ſhew what it is. The greateſt characters the world have known, have riſen on the democratic floor. Ariſtocracy has not been able to keep a proportionate pace with democracy. The artificial NOBLE ſhrinks into a dwarf before the NOBLE of Nature; and in the few inſtances of thoſe (for there are ſome in all countries) in whom nature, as by a miracle, has ſurvived in ariſtocracy, THOSE MEN DESPISE IT. ——But it is time to proceed to a new ſubject.

The French conſtitution has reformed the condition of the clergy. It has raiſed the income of the lower and middle claſſes, and taken from the higher. None is now leſs than twelve hundred livres (fifty pounds ſterling) nor any higher than above two or three thouſand pounds. What will Mr. Burke place againſt this? Hear what he ſays.

He ſays, "That the people of England can ſee without pain or grudging, "an archbiſhop precede a duke; they can ſee a biſhop of Durham, or a "biſhop of Winchester, in poſſeſſion of £.10,000 a year; and cannot ſee "why it is in worſe hands than eſtates to the like amount in the hands "of this earl or that 'ſquire." And Mr. Burke offers this as an example to France.

As to the firſt part, whether the archbiſhop precedes the duke, or the duke the biſhop, it is, I believe, to the people in general, ſomewhat like *Sternhold* and *Hopkins* or *Hopkins* and *Sternhold*; you may put which you pleaſe firſt: And as I confeſs that I do not underſtand the merits of this caſe, I will not contend it with Mr. Burke.

But with reſpect to the latter, I have ſomething to ſay.—Mr. Burke has not put the caſe right —The compariſon is out of order, by being put between the biſhop and the earl or the 'ſquire. It ought to be put between the biſhop and the curate, and then it will ſtand thus:—*The people of England can ſee without pain or grudging, a biſhop of Durham, or a biſhop of Winchester, in poſſeſſion of ten thouſand pounds a-year, and a curate on thirty or forty pounds a-year or leſs.*—No, Sir, they certainly do not ſee thoſe things without great pain or grudging. It is a caſe that applies itſelf to every man's ſenſe of juſtice, and is one among many that calls aloud for a conſtitution.

In France, the cry of "*the church! the church!*" was repeated as often as in Mr. Burke's book, and as loudly as when the diſſenter's bill was before the Engliſh parliament; but the generality of the French clergy were not to be deceived by this cry any longer. They knew, that whatever the pretence might be, it was themſelves who were one of the principal objects of it. It was the cry of the high beneficed clergy, to prevent any regulation of income taking place between thoſe of ten thouſand a-year and the pariſh prieſt. They therefore, joined their caſe to thoſe of every other oppreſſed claſs of men, and by their union obtained redreſs.

The French conſtitution has aboliſhed tythes, that ſource of perpetual diſcontent between the tythe-holder and the pariſhioner. When land is held on tythe, it is the condition of an eſtate held between two parties; the one receiving one-tenth, and the other nine-tenths of the produce: And, conſequently, on principles of equity, if the eſtate can be improved, and made to produce by that improvement double or treble what it did before, or in any other

other ratio, the expence of ſuch improvement ought to be borne in like proportion between the parties who are to ſhare the produce. But this is not the caſe in tythes; the farmer bears the whole expence, and the tythe-holder takes a tenth of the improvement, in addition to the original tenth, and by this means gets the value of two tenths, inſtead of one. This is another caſe that calls for a conſtitution.

The French conſtitution hath aboliſhed or renounced *Toleration*, and *Intolerance* alſo, and hath eſtabliſhed UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE.

Toleration is not the *oppoſite* of Intolerance, but is the *counterfeit* of it. Both are deſpotiſms. The one aſſumes to itſelf the right of withholding Liberty of Conſcience, and the other of granting it. The one is the pope armed with fire and faggot, and the other is the ſelling or granting indulgencies. The former is church and ſtate, and the latter is church and traffic.

But Toleration may be viewed in a much ſtronger light. Man worſhips not himſelf, but his Maker; and the liberty of conſcience which he claims is not for the ſervice of himſelf, but of his God. In this caſe, therefore, we muſt neceſſarily have the aſſociated idea of two beings; the *mortal* who renders the worſhip, and the IMMORTAL BEING who is worſhipped. Toleration, therefore, places itſelf, not between man and man, nor between church and church, nor between one denomination of religion and another, but between God and man; between the being who worſhips, and the BEING who is worſhipped; and by the ſame act of aſſumed authority by which it tolerates man to pay his worſhip, it preſumptuouſly and blaſphemouſly ſets itſelf up to tolerate the Almighty to receive it.

Were a Bill brought into any parliament, intitled "AN ACT to tolerate "or grant liberty to the Almighty to receive the worſhip of a Jew or a Turk, or "to prohibit the Almighty from receiving it," all men would ſtartle, and call it blaſphemy. There would be an uproar. The preſumption of toleration in religious matters would then preſent itſelf unmaſked: But the preſumption is not the leſs becauſe the name of "Man" only appears to thoſe laws, for the aſſociated idea of the *worſhipper* and the *worſhipped* cannot be ſeparated.—Who, then, art thou, vain duſt and aſhes! by whatever name thou art called, whether a King, a Biſhop, a Church, or a State, a Parliament, or any thing elſe, that obtrudeſt thine inſignificance between the ſoul of man and its Maker? Mind thine own concerns. If he believes not as thou believeſt, it is a proof that thou believeſt not as he believeth, and there is no earthly power can determine between you.

With reſpect to what are called denominations of religion, if every one is left to judge of its own religion, there is no ſuch thing as a religion that is wrong; but if they are to judge of each others religion, there is no ſuch a thing as a religion that is right; and therefore, all the world is right or all the world is wrong. But with reſpect to religion itſelf, without regard to names, and as directing itſelf from the univerſal family of mankind to the Divine object of all adoration, *it is man bringing to his Maker the fruits of his heart*; and though thoſe fruits may differ from each other like the fruits of the earth, the grateful tribute of every one is accepted.

A Biſhop of Durham, or a Biſhop of Wincheſter or the Archbiſhop who heads the Dukes, who will not refuſe a tythe-ſheaf of wheat, becauſe it is not a cock of hay; nor a cock of hay, becauſe it is not a ſheaf of wheat; nor a pig, becauſe it is neither one nor the other: But theſe ſame perſons, under the figure of an eſtabliſhed church, will not permit their Maker to receive the varied tythes of man's devotion.

One of the continual choruſſes of Mr. Burke's book is, "Church and "State."

"State." He does not mean ſome one particular church, or ſome one particular ſtate, but any church and ſtate; and he uſes the term as a general figure to hold forth the political doctrine of always uniting the church with the ſtate in every country, and he cenſures the National Aſſembly for not having done this in France.—Let us beſtow a few thoughts on this ſubject.

All religions are in their nature kind and benign, and united with principles of morality. They could not have made proſelites at firſt, by profeſſing any thing that was vicious, cruel, perſecuting, or immoral. Like every thing elſe, they had their beginning; and they proceeded by perſuaſion, exhortation, and example. How then is it that they loſe their native mildneſs and become moroſe and intolerant?

It proceeds from the connection which Mr. Burke recommends. By engendering the church with the ſtate, a ſort of mule-animal, capable only of deſtroying, and not of breeding up, is produced, called *The Church eſtabliſhed by Law.* It is a ſtranger, even from its birth, to any parent mother on which it is begotten, and whom in time it kicks out and deſtroys.

The inquiſition in Spain does not proceed from the religion originally profeſſed, but from this mule animal, engendered between the church and the ſtate. The burnings in Smithfield proceeded from the ſame heterogeneous production; and it was the regeneration of this ſtrange animal in England afterwards, that renewed rancour and irreligion among the inhabitants, and that drove the people called Quakers and Diſſenters to America. Perſecution is not an original feature in *any* religion; but it is always the ſtrongly marked feature of all law-religions, or religions eſtabliſhed by law. Take away the law-eſtabliſhment, and every religion re-aſſumes its original benignity. In America, a Catholic Prieſt is a good citizen, a good character, and a good neighbour; an Epiſcopalian Miniſter is of the ſame deſcription: And this proceeds, independently of the men, from there being no law-eſtabliſhment in America.

If alſo we view this matter in a temporal ſenſe, we ſhall ſee the ill effects it has had on the proſperity of nations. The union of church and ſtate has impoveriſhed Spain. The revoking the edict of Nantz drove the ſilk manufacture from France into England; and church and ſtate are now driving the cotton manufacture from England to America and France. Let then Mr. Burke continue to preach his antipolitical doctrine of Church and State. It will do ſome good. The National Aſſembly will not follow his advice, but will benefit by his folly. It was by obſerving the ill effects of it in England that America has been warned againſt it; and it is by experiencing them in France, that the National Aſſembly have aboliſhed it, and, like America, have eſtabliſhed UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE, AND UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CITIZENSHIP *. I will

* *When in any country we ſee extraordinary circumſtances taking place, they naturally lead any man who has a talent for obſervation and inveſtigation, to enquire into the cauſes. The manufactures of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, are the principal manufactures in England. From whence did this ariſe? A little obſervation will explain the caſe. The principal, and the generality of the inhabitants of thoſe places, are not of what is called in England,* the church eſtabliſhed by law; *and they, or their fathers, (for it is within but a few years,) withdrew from the perſecution of the chartered towns, where teſt-laws more particularly operate, and eſtabliſhed a ſort of aſylum for themſelves in thoſe places. It was the only aſylum that then offered, for the reſt of Europe was worſe.—But the caſe is now changing. France and America bid all comers welcome,*

I will here ceaſe the compariſon with reſpect to the principles of the French conſtitution, and conclude this part of the ſubject with a few obſervations on the organization of the formal parts of the French and Engliſh governments.

The executive power in each country is in the hands of a perſon ſtiled the King; but the French conſtitution diſtinguiſhes between the King and the Sovereign: It conſiders the ſtation of King as official, and places Sovereignty in the nation.

The repreſentatives of the nation, who compoſe the National Aſſembly, and who are the legiſlative power, originate in and from the people by election, as an inherent right in the people.—In England it is otherwiſe; and this ariſes from the original eſtabliſhment of what is called its monarchy; for, as by the conqueſt all the rights of the people or the nation were abſorbed into the hands of the Conqueror, and who added the title of King to that of Conqueror, thoſe ſame matters which in France are now held as rights in the people, or in the nation, are held in England as grants from what is called the Crown. The Parliament in England, in both its branches, was erected by patents from the deſcendants of the Conqueror. The Houſe of Commons did not originate as a matter of right in the people to delegate or elect, but as a grant or boon.

By the French Conſtitution, the Nation is always named before the King. The third article of the Declaration of Rights ſays, "*The nation is eſſentially the ſource* (or fountain) *of all ſovereignty.*" Mr. Burke argues, that, in England, a King is the fountain—that he is the fountain of all honour. But as this idea is evidently deſcended from the Conqueſt, I ſhall make no other remark upon it, than that it is the nature of conqueſt to turn every thing upſide down; and as Mr. Burke will not be refuſed the privilege of ſpeaking twice, and as there are but two parts in the figure, the *fountain* and the *ſpout*, he will be right the ſecond time.

The French conſtitution puts the legiſlative before the executive; the Law before the King; *La Loi, Le Roi.* This alſo is in the natural order of things; becauſe laws muſt have exiſtence, before they can have execution.

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welcome, and initiate them into all the rights of citizenſhip. Policy and intereſt, therefore, will, but perhaps too late, dictate in England, what reaſon and juſtice could not. Thoſe manufactures are withdrawing, and are ariſing in other places. There is now erecting at Paſſey, three miles from Paris, a large cotton mill, and ſeveral are already erected in America. Soon after the rejecting the bill for repealing the teſt-law, one of the richeſt manufacturers in England ſaid in my hearing, "England, Sir, is not a country for a diſſenter to live in—we muſt go to France." Theſe are truths, and it is doing juſtice to both parties to tell them. It is chiefly the diſſenters who have carried Engliſh manufactures to the height they are now at, and the ſame men have it in their power to carry them away; and though thoſe manufactures will afterwards continue to be made in thoſe places, the foreign market will be loſt. There are frequently appearing in the London Gazette, extracts from certain acts to prevent machines and perſons, as far as they can extend to perſons, from going out of the country. It appears from theſe, that the ill effects of the teſt-laws and church-eſtabliſhment begin to be much ſuſpected; but the remedy of force can never ſupply the remedy of reaſon. In the progreſs of leſs than a century, all the unrepreſented part of England, of all denominations, which is at leaſt a hundred times the moſt numerous, may begin to feel the neceſſity of a conſtitution and then all thoſe matters will come regularly before them.

A King

A King in France does not, in addreſſing himſelf to the National Aſſembly, ſay, "My aſſembly," ſimilar to the phraſe uſed in England of *my* "Parliament;" neither can he uſe it conſiſtently with the conſtitution, nor could it be admitted. There may be propriety in the uſe of it in England, becauſe, as is before mentioned, both Houſes of Parliament originated from what is called the Crown by patent or boon—and not from the inherent rights of the people, as the National Aſſembly does in France, and whoſe name deſignates its origin.

The Preſident of the National Aſſembly does not aſk the King *to grant to the Aſſembly liberty of ſpeech*, as is the caſe with the Engliſh Houſe of Commons. The conſtitutional dignity of the National Aſſembly cannot debaſe itſelf. Speech is, in the firſt place, one of the natural rights of man always retained; and with reſpect to the National Aſſembly, the uſe of it is their *duty*, and the nation is their *authority*. They were elected by the greateſt body of men exerciſing the right of election the European world ever ſaw. They ſprung not from the filth of rotten boroughs, nor are they the vaſſal repreſentatives of ariſtocratical ones. Feeling the proper dignity of their character, they ſupport it. Their parliamentary language, whether for or againſt a queſtion, is free, bold, and manly, and extends to all the parts and circumſtances of the caſe. If any matter or ſubject reſpecting the executive department, or the perſon who preſides in it (the King), comes before them, it is debated on with the ſpirit of men, and the language of gentlemen; and their anſwer, or their addreſs, is returned in the ſame ſtile. They ſtand not aloof with the gaping vacuity of vulgar ignorance, nor bend with the cringe of ſycophantic inſignificance. The graceful pride of truth knows no extremes, and preſerves, in every latitude of life, the right-angled character of man.

Let us now look to the other ſide of the queſtion.—In the addreſſes of the Engliſh Parliaments to their Kings, we ſee neither the intrepid ſpirit of the old Parliaments of France, nor the ſerene dignity of the preſent National Aſſembly; neither do we ſee in them any thing of the ſtile of Engliſh manners, which border ſomewhat on bluntneſs. Since then they are neither of foreign extraction, nor naturally of Engliſh production, their origin muſt be ſought for elſewhere, and that origin is from the Norman Conqueſt. They are evidently of the vaſſalage claſs of manners, and emphatically mark the proſtrate diſtance that exiſts in no other condition of men than between the conqueror and conquered. That this vaſſalage idea and ſtile of ſpeaking was not got rid of even at the Revolution of 1688, is evident from the declaration of Parliament to William and Mary, in theſe words: "We do moſt humbly "and faithfully *ſubmit* ourſelves, our heirs and poſterity, for ever." Submiſſion is wholly a vaſſalage term, repugnant to the dignity of Freedom, and an echo of the language uſed at the Conqueſt.

As the eſtimation of all things is by compariſon, the Revolution of 1688, however from circumſtances it may have been exalted beyond its value, will find its level. It is already on the wane, eclipſed by the enlarged orb of reaſon, and the luminous revolutions of America and France. In leſs than another century, it will go, as well as Mr. Burke's labours, "to the family vault of all the Capulets."

But there is a truth that ought to be made known: I have had the opportunity of ſeeing it; which is, *that, notwithſtanding appearances, there is not any deſcription of men that deſpiſe monarchy ſo much as courtiers.* But they well know, that if it were ſeen by others, as it is ſeen by them, the juggle could not be kept up. They are in the condition of men who get their living

by a ſhow, and to whom the folly of that ſhow is ſo familiar that they ridicule it; but were the audience to be made as wiſe in this reſpect as themſelves, there would be an end to the ſhow and to the profits with it. The difference between a republican and a courtier with reſpect to monarchy, is, that the one oppoſes monarchy, believing it to be ſomething; and the other laughs at it, knowing it to be nothing.

As I uſed ſometimes to correſpond with Mr. Burke, believing him then to be a man of ſounder principles than his book ſhews him to be, I wrote to him laſt winter from Paris, and gave him an account how proſperouſly matters were going on. Among other ſubjects in that letter, I referred to the happy ſituation the National Aſſembly were placed in; that they had taken a ground on which their moral duty and their political intereſt were united. They have not to hold out a language which they do not themſelves believe, for the fraudulent purpoſe of making others believe it. Their ſtation requires no artifice to ſupport it, and can only be maintained by enlightning mankind. It is not their intereſt to cheriſh ignorance, but to diſpel it. They are not in the caſe of a miniſterial or an oppoſition party in England, who, though they are oppoſed, are ſtill united to keep up the common myſtery. The National Aſſembly muſt throw open a magazine of light. It muſt ſhew man the proper character of man; and the nearer it can bring him to that ſtandard, the ſtronger the National Aſſembly becomes.

In contemplating the French conſtitution, we ſee in it a rational order of things. The principles harmoniſe with the forms, and both with their origin. It may perhaps be ſaid as an excuſe for bad forms, that they are nothing more than forms; but this is a miſtake. Forms grow out of principles, and operate to continue the principles they grow from. It is impoſſible to practiſe a bad form on any thing but a bad principle. It cannot be ingrafted on a good one; and wherever the forms in any government are bad, it is a certain indication that the principles are bad alſo.

I will here finally cloſe this ſubject. I began it by remarking that Mr. Burke had *voluntarily* declined going into a compariſon of the Engliſh and French conſtitutions. He apologiſes (in page 241) for not doing it, by ſaying that he had not time. Mr. Burke's book was upwards of eight months in hand, and is extended to a volume of three hundred and ſixty-ſix pages. As his omiſſion does injury to his cauſe, his apology makes it worſe; and men on the Engliſh ſide the water will begin to conſider, whether there is not ſome radical defect in what is called the Engliſh conſtitution, that made it neceſſary for Mr. Burke to ſuppreſs the compariſon, to avoid bringing it into view.

As Mr. Burke has not written on conſtitutions, ſo neither has he written on the French revolution. He gives no account of its commencement or progreſs. He only expreſſes his wonder. "It looks," ſays he, "to me, "as if I were in a great criſis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all "Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumſtances taken together, "the French Revolution is the moſt aſtoniſhing that has hitherto happened "in the world."

As wiſe men are aſtoniſhed at fooliſh things, and other people at wiſe ones, I know not on which ground to account for Mr. Burke's aſtoniſhment; but certain it is, that he does not underſtand the French revolution. It has apparently burſt forth like a creation from a chaos, but it is no more than the conſequence of a mental revolution priorily exiſting in France. The mind of the nation had changed before-hand, and the new order of things had naturally followed the new order of thoughts.—I will here, as conciſely as I can, trace out

out the growth of the French revolution, and mark the circumſtances that have contributed to produce it.

The deſpotiſm of Louis XIV. united with the gaiety of his court, and the gaudy oſtentation of his character, had ſo humbled, and at the ſame time ſo faſcinated the mind of France, that the people appeared to have loſt all ſenſe of their own dignity, in contemplating that of their Grand Monarch: And the whole reign of Louis XV. remarkable only for weakneſs and effeminacy, made no other alteration than that of ſpreading a ſort of lethargy over the nation, from which it ſhewed no diſpoſition to riſe.

The only ſigns which appeared of the ſpirit of Liberty during thoſe periods, are to be found in the writings of the French philoſophers. Monteſquieu, preſident of the Parliament of Bourdeaux, went as far as a writer under a deſpotic government could well proceed; and being obliged to divide himſelf between principle and prudence, his mind often appears under a veil, and we ought to give him credit for more than he has expreſſed.

Voltaire, who was both the flatterer and the ſatiriſt of deſpotiſm, took another line. His forte lay in expoſing and ridiculing the ſuperſtitions which prieſt-craft united with ſtate-craft had interwoven with governments. It was not from the purity of his principles, or his love of mankind, (for ſatire and philanthropy are not naturally concordant,) but from his ſtrong capacity of ſeeing folly in its true ſhape, and his irreſiſtible propenſity to expoſe it, that he made thoſe attacks. They were however as formidable as if the motives had been virtuous; and he merits the thanks, rather than the eſteem of mankind.

On the contrary, we find in the writings of Rouſſeau and the Abbé Raynal, a loveline's of ſentiment in favour of liberty, that excites reſpect, and elevates the human faculties; but having raiſed this animation, they do not direct its operations, and leave the mind in love with an object without deſcribing the means of poſſeſſing it.

The writings of Queſnay, Turgot, and the friends of thoſe authors, are of the ſerious kind; but they laboured under the ſame diſadvantage with Monteſquieu: Their writings abound with moral maxims of government, but are rather directed to œconomiſe and reform the adminiſtration of the government, than the government itſelf.

But all thoſe writings, and many others, had their weight; and by the different manner in which they treated the ſubject of government, Monteſquieu by his judgment and knowledge of laws, Voltaire by his wit, Rouſſeau and Raynal by their animation, and Queſnay and Turgot by their moral maxims and ſyſtems of œconomy, readers of every claſs may meet with ſomething to their taſte, and a ſpirit of political enquiry began to diffuſe itſelf through the nation at the time of the diſpute between England and the then colonies of America broke out.

In the war which France afterwards engaged in, it is very well known that the nation appeared to be before hand with the French miniſtry. Each of them had its view: But thoſe views were directed to different objects; The one ſought liberty, and the other retaliation on England. The French officers and ſoldiers who after this went to America, were eventually placed in the ſchool of Freedom, and learned the practice as well as the principles of it by heart.

As it is impoſſible to ſeparate the military events which took place in America, from the principles of the American revolution, the publication of thoſe events in France neceſſarily connected themſelves with the principles which produced them. Many of the facts were in themſelves prin-

ciples; ſuch as the Declaration of American Independence, and the Treaty of Alliance between France and America, which recogniſed the natural right of man, and juſtified reſiſtance to oppreſſion.

The then miniſter of France, Count Vergennes, was not the friend of America; and it is both juſtice and gratitude to ſay, that it was the queen of France who gave the cauſe of America a faſhion at the French court. Count Vergennes was the perſonal and ſocial friend of Dr. Franklin; and the doctor had obtained, by his ſenſible graceſulneſs, a ſort of influence over him; but, with reſpect to principles, Count Vergennes was a deſpot.

The ſituation of Dr. Franklin, as miniſter from America to France, ſhould be taken into the chain of circumſtances. The diplomatic character is of itſelf the narroweſt ſphere of ſociety that man can act in. It forbids intercourſe by a reciprocity of ſuſpicion; and a diplomatic is a ſort of unconnected atom, continually repelling and repelled. But this was not the caſe with Dr. Franklin. He was not the diplomatic of a court but of MAN. His character as a philoſopher had been long eſtabliſhed, and his circle of ſociety in France was univerſal.

Count Vergennes reſiſted for a conſiderable time the publication in France of the American conſtitutions, tranſlated into the French language; but even in this he was obliged to give way to public opinion, and a ſort of propriety in admitting to appear what he had undertaken to defend. The American conſtitutions were to liberty what a grammar is to language: They define its parts of ſpeech and practically conſtruct them into ſyntax.

The peculiar ſituation of the then Marquis de la Fayette is another link in the great chain. He ſerved in America as an American officer under a commiſſion of Congreſs, and by the univerſality of his acquaintance was in cloſe friendſhip with the civil government of America, as well as with the military line. He ſpoke the language of the country, entered into the diſcuſſions on the principles of government, and was always a welcome friend at any election.

When the war cloſed a vaſt reinforcement to the cauſe of liberty ſpread itſelf over France, by the return of the French officers and ſoldiers. A knowledge of the practice was then joined to the theory; and all that was wanting to give it real exiſtence was opportunity. Man cannot, properly ſpeaking, make circumſtances for his purpoſe, but he always has it in his power to improve them when they occur; and this was the caſe in France.

M. Neckar was diſplaced in May, 1781; and by the ill management of the finances afterwards, and particularly during the extravagant adminiſtration of M. Calonne, the revenue of France, which was nearly twenty-four millions ſterling *per* year, was become unequal to the expenditure, not becauſe the revenue had decreaſed, but becauſe the expences had increaſed; and this was the circumſtance which the nation laid hold of to bring forward a revolution. The Engliſh miniſter, Mr. Pitt, has frequently alluded to the ſtate of the French finances in his budgets, without underſtanding the ſubject. Had the French parliaments been as ready to regiſter edicts for new taxes as an Engliſh parliament is to grant them, there had been no derangement in the finances, nor yet any revolution; but this will better explain itſelf as I proceed.

It will be neceſſary here to ſhew how taxes were formerly raiſed in France. The king, or rather the court or miniſtry acting under the uſe

of

of that name, framed the edicts for taxes at their own diſcretion, and ſent them to the parliaments to be regiſtered; for until they were regiſtered by the parliaments, they were not operative. Diſputes had long exiſted between the court and the parliaments with reſpect to the extent of the parliament's authority on this head. The court inſiſted that the authority of parliaments went no farther than to remonſtrate or *ſhew* reaſons againſt the tax, reſerving to itſelf the right of determining whether the reaſons were well or ill founded; and in conſequence thereof, either to withdraw the edict as a matter of choice, or to *order* it to be enregiſtered as a matter of authority. The parliaments on their part inſiſted, that they had not only a right to remonſtrate, but to reject; and on this ground they were always ſupported by the nation.

But, to return to the order of my narrative—M. Calonne wanted money; and as he knew the ſturdy diſpoſitions of the parliaments with reſpect to new taxes, he ingeniouſly ſought either to approach them by a more gentle means than that of direct authority, or to get over their heads by a manœuvre; and for this purpoſe he revived the project of aſſembling a body of men from the ſeveral provinces, under the ſtyle of an "Aſſembly of the Notables," or Men of Note, who met in 1787, and who were either to recommend taxes to the parliaments, or to act as a parliament themſelves. An aſſembly under this name had been called in 1617.

As we are to view this as the firſt practical ſtep towards the revolution, it will be proper to enter into ſome particulars reſpecting it. The Aſſembly of the Notables has in ſome places been miſtaken for the States-General, but was wholly a different body; the States-General being always by election. The perſons who compoſed the Aſſembly of the Notables were all nominated by the king, and conſiſted of one hundred and forty members. But as M. Calonne could not depend on a majority of this aſſembly in his favor, he very ingeniouſly arranged them in ſuch a manner as to make forty-four a majority of one hundred and forty: To effect this, he diſpoſed of them into ſeven ſeparate committees, of twenty members each. Every general queſtion was to be decided, not by a majority of perſons, but by a majority of committees; and as eleven votes would make a majority in a committee, and four committees a majority of ſeven, M. Calonne had good reaſon to conclude, that as forty-four would determine any general queſtion, he could not be out-voted. But all his plans deceived him, and in the event became his overthrow.

The then Marquis de la Fayette was placed in the ſecond committee, of which Count d' Artois was preſident: And as money matters was the object, it naturally brought into view every circumſtance connected with it. M. de la Fayette made a verbal charge againſt Calonne, for ſelling crown-lands to the amount of two millions of livres, in a manner that appeared to be unknown to the King. The Count D' Artois (as if to intimidate, for the Baſtille was then in being) aſked the Marquis if he would render the charge in writing? He replied, that he would.—The Count D' Artois did not demand it, but brought a meſſage from the King to that purport. M. de la Fayette then delivered in his charge in writing, to be given to the King, undertaking to ſupport it. No farther proceedings were had upon this affair; but M. Calonne was ſoon after diſmiſſed by the King, and ſet off to England.

As M. de la Fayette, from the experience of what he had ſeen in America, was better acquainted with the ſcience of civil government than the generality of the members who compoſed the Aſſembly of the Notables could then be, the brunt of the buſineſs fell conſiderably to his ſhare. The

plan of thoſe who had a conſtitution in view, was to contend with the court on the ground of taxes, and ſome of them openly profeſſed their object. Diſputes frequently aroſe between the Count d'Artois and M. de la Fayette, upon various ſubjects. With reſpect to the arrears already incurred, the latter propoſed to remedy them, by accommodating the expences to the revenue, inſtead of the revenue to the expences; and as objects of reform he propoſed to aboliſh the Baſtille, and all the State-priſons throughout the nation, (the keeping of which was attended with great expence,) and to ſuppreſs the *Lettres de Cachet:* But thoſe matters were not then much attended to; and with reſpect to *Lettres de Cachet, a majority of the nobles appeared to be in favour of them.*

On the ſubject of ſupplying the treaſury by new taxes, the aſſembly declined taking the matter on themſelves, concurring in the opinion, that they had not authority. In a debate on this ſubject, M. de la Fayette ſaid, that raiſing money by taxes could only be done by a National Aſſembly, freely elected by the people, and acting as their repreſentatives. Do you mean, ſaid the Count d'Artois, the *States-General?* M. de la Fayette replied, that he did. Will you, ſaid the Count d'Artois, ſign what you ſay, to be given to the king? The other replied, that he not only would do this, but that he would go farther, and ſay, that the effectual mode would be for the king to agree to the eſtabliſhment of a conſtitution.

As one of the plans had thus failed, that of getting the aſſembly to act as a parliament, the other came into view that of recommending. On this ſubject, the Aſſembly agreed to recommend two new taxes to be enregiſtered by the Parliament: The one a ſtamp-tax, and the other a territorial, or ſort of land-tax. The two have been eſtimated at about five millions ſterling *per annum.* We have now to turn our attention to the Parliaments, on whom the buſineſs was again devolving.

The Archbiſhop of Thouloufe (ſince Archbiſhop of Sens, and now a Cardinal) was appointed to the adminiſtration of the finances, ſoon after the diſmiſſion of Calonne. He was alſo made Prime Miniſter, an office that did not always exiſt in France. When this office did not exiſt, the Chief of each of the principal departments tranſacted buſineſs immediately with the King; but when a Prime Miniſter was appointed, they did buſineſs only with him. The Archbiſhop arrived at more State authority than any miniſter ſince the Duke de Choiſeul, and the nation was ſtrongly diſpoſed in his favour; but by a line of conduct ſcarcely to be accounted for, he perverted every opportunity, turned out a deſpot, and ſunk into diſgrace and a Cardinal.

The Aſſembly of the Notables having broken up, the new Miniſter ſent the edicts for the two new taxes recommended by the Aſſembly to the Parliaments, to be enregiſtered. They, of courſe, came firſt before the Parliament of Paris, who returned for anſwer, *That with ſuch a revenue as the nation then ſupported, the name of taxes ought not to be mentioned, but for the purpoſe of reducing them*; and threw both the edicts out *.

On this refuſal, the Parliament was ordered to Verſailles, where, in the uſual form, the King held, what, under the old government, was called a Bed of Juſtice; and the two edicts were enregiſtered in preſence of the parliament, by an order of State, in the manner mentioned in page 41. On this, the parliament immediately returned to Paris, renewed their ſeſſion in form, and ordered the enregiſtering to be ſtruck out, declaring

* *When the Engliſh Miniſter, Mr. Pitt, mentions the French finances again in the Engliſh parliament, it would be well that he notice this as an example.*

that every thing done at Verſailles was illegal. All the members of the Parliament were then ſerved with *Lettres de Cachet*, and exiled to Troie; but as they continued as inflexible in exile as before, and as vengeance did not ſupply the place of taxes, they were after a ſhort time recalled to Paris.

The edicts were again tendered to them, and the Count d'Artois undertook to act as repreſentative to the King. For this purpoſe, he came from Verſailles to Paris in a train of proceſſion; and the parliament was aſſembled to receive him. But ſhow and parade had loſt their influence in France; and with whatever ideas of importance he ſet off with, he had to return with thoſe of mortification and diſappointment. On alighting from his carriage to aſcend the ſteps of the Parliament-houſe, the crowd, which was numerouſly collected, threw out trite expreſſions, ſaying, "This is Monſieur d'Artois, who wants more of our money to ſpend?" The marked diſapprobation which he ſaw, impreſſed him with apprehenſions; and the word *Aux armes!* (To arms!) was given out by the officer of the guards who attended him. It was ſo loudly vociferated, that it echoed through the avenues of the houſe, and produced a temporary confuſion: I was then ſtanding in one of the apartments through which he had to paſs, and could not avoid reflecting how wretched was the condition of a diſreſpected man.

He endeavoured to impreſs the Parliament by great words, and opened his authority by ſaying, "The King, our Lord and Maſter." The Parliament received him very coolly, and with their uſual determination not to regiſter the taxes; and in this manner the interview ended.

After this a new ſubject took place, In the various debates and conteſts which aroſe between the Court and the Parliaments on the ſubject of taxes, the Parliament of Paris at laſt declared, that although it had been cuſtomary for Parliaments to enregiſter edicts for taxes as a matter of convenience, the right belonging only to the *States General*; and that, therefore, the Parliament could no longer with propriety debate on what it had not authority to act. The King, after this, came to Paris, and held a meeting with the Parliament, in which he continued from ten in the morning till about ſix in the evening; and, in manner that appeared to proceed from him, as if unconſulted upon with the cabinet or the miniſtry, gave his word to the Parliament, that the States General ſhould be convened.

But after this another ſcene aroſe, on a ground different from all the former. The miniſtry and the cabinet were averſe to calling the States-General; They well knew, that if the States-General were aſſembled, themſelves muſt fall; and as the King had not mentioned *any time*, they hit on a project calculated to elude, without appearing to oppoſe.

For this purpoſe, the Court ſet about making a ſort of conſtitution itſelf. It was principally the work of M. Lamoignon, Keeper of the Seals, who afterwards ſhot himſelf. This new arrangement conſiſted in eſtabliſhing a body under the name of the *Cour pléniere*, or full Court, in which were inveſted all the powers that the government might have occaſion to make uſe of. The perſons compoſing this Court were to be nominated by the King; the contended right of taxation was given up on the part of the King, and a new criminal code of laws and law proceedings was ſubſtituted in the room of the former. The thing, in many points, contained better principles than thoſe upon which the government had hitherto been adminiſtered: But with reſpect to the *Cour pléniere*, it was no other than a medium through which deſpotiſm was to paſs, without appearing to act directly from itſelf.

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The Cabinet had high expectations from their new contrivance. The perſons who were to compoſe the *Cour pléniere* were already nominated; and as it was neceſſary to carry a fair appearance, many of the beſt characters in the nation were appointed among the number. It was to commence on the 8th of May, 1788: But an oppoſition aroſe to it on two grounds—the one as to principle, the other as to form.

On the ground of principle it was contended, That government had not a right to alter itſelf; and that if the practice was once admitted, it would grow into a principle, and be made a preſident for any future alterations the government might wiſh to eſtabliſh: That the right of altering the government was a national right, and not a right of government.—And on the ground of form, it was contended, That the *Cour pléniere* was nothing more than a larger Cabinet.

The then Duke de la Rochefoucault, Luxembourg, De Noailles, and many others, refuſed to accept the nomination, and ſtrenuouſly oppoſed the whole plan. When the edict for eſtabliſhing this new Court was ſent to the Parliaments to be enregiſtered, and put into execution, they reſiſted alſo. The Parliament of Paris not only refuſed, but denied the authority; and the conteſt renewed itſelf between the Parliament and the Cabinet more ſtrongly than ever. While the Parliament was ſitting in debate on this ſubject, the Miniſtry ordered a regiment of ſoldiers to ſurround the houſe, and form a blockade. The members ſent out for beds and proviſions, and lived as in a beſieged citadel; and as this had no effect, the commanding officer was ordered to enter the Parliament houſe and ſeize them; which he did, and ſome of the principal members were ſhut up in different priſons. About the ſame time a deputation of perſons arrived from the province of Brittany, to remonſtrate againſt the eſtabliſhment of the *Cour pléniere*; and thoſe the Archbiſhop ſent to the Baſtille. But the ſpirit of the Nation was not to be overcome; and it was ſo fully ſenſible of the ſtrong ground it had taken, that of withholding taxes, that it contented itſelf with keeping up a ſort of quiet reſiſtance, which effectually overthrew all the plans at that time formed againſt it. The project of the *Cour pléniere* was at laſt obliged to be given up, and the Prime Miniſter not long afterwards followed its fate; and M. Neckar was recalled into office.

The attempt to eſtabliſh the *Cour pléniere* had an effect upon the Nation which itſelf did not perceive. It was a ſort of new form of government, that inſenſibly ſerved to put the old one out of ſight, and to unhinge it from the ſuperſtitious authority of antiquity. It was government dethroning government; and the old one, by attempting to make a new one, made a chaſm.

The failure of this ſcheme renewed the ſubject of convening the States-General; and this gave riſe to a new ſeries of politics. There was no ſettled form for convening the States-General: All that is poſitively meant, was a deputation from what was then called the Clergy, the Nobleſſe, and the Commons; but their numbers, or their proportions, had not been always the ſame. They had been convened only on extraordinary occaſions, the laſt of which was in 1614; their number were then in equal proportions, and they voted by orders.

It would not well eſcape the ſagacity of M. Neckar, that the mode of 1614 would anſwer neither the purpoſe of the then government, nor of the nation. As matters were at that time circumſtanced, it would have been too contentious to agree upon any thing. The debates would have been

been endleſs upon privileges and exemptions, in which neither the wants of the government, nor the wiſhes of the nation for a conſtitution, would have been attended to. But as he did not chuſe to take the deciſion upon himſelf, he ſummoned again the *Aſſembly of the Notables*, and referred it to them. This body was in general intereſted in the deciſion, being chiefly of the ariſtocracy and the high-paid clergy; and they decided in favour of the mode of 1614. This deciſion was againſt the ſenſe of the nation, and alſo againſt the wiſhes of the Court; for the ariſtocracy oppoſed itſelf to both, and contended for privileges independent of either. The ſubject was then taken up by the Parliament, who recommended, that the number of the Commons ſhould be equal to the other two; and that they ſhould all ſit in one houſe, and vote in one body. The number finally determined on was twelve hundred; ſix hundred to be choſen by the Commons, (and this was leſs than their proportion ought to have been, when their worth and conſequence is conſidered on a national ſcale) three hundred by the Clergy, and three hundred by the Ariſtocracy; but with reſpect to the mode of aſſembling themſelves, whether together or apart, or the manner in which they ſhould vote, thoſe matters were referred *.

The election that followed, was not a conteſted election, but an animated one. The candidates were not men, but principles. Societies were formed in Paris, and committees of correſpondence and communication eſtabliſhed throughout the nation, for the purpoſe of enlightening the people, and explaining to them the principles of civil government; and ſo orderly was the election conducted, that it did not give riſe even to the rumour of tumult.

The States-General were to meet at Verſailles in April 1789, but did not aſſemble till May. They ſituated themſelves in three ſeparate chambers, or rather the Clergy and the Ariſtocracy withdrew each into a ſeparate chamber. The majority of the ariſtocracy claimed what they called the privilege of voting as a ſeparate body, and of giving their conſent or

* *Mr. Burke, (and I muſt take the liberty of telling him he is very unacquainted with French affairs,) ſpeaking upon this ſubject, ſays, "The firſt thing that ſtruck me in the calling the States General, was a great departure from the ancient courſe;"—and he ſoon after ſays, "From the moment I read the liſt, I ſaw diſtinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow."—Mr. Burke certainly did not ſee all than was to follow. I endeavoured to impreſs him, as well before as after the States-General met, that there would be a* revolution; *but was not able to make him ſee it, neither would he believe it. How then he could diſtinctly ſee all the parts, when the whole was out of ſight, is beyond my comprehenſion. And with reſpect to the "departure from the ancient courſe," beſides the natural weakneſs of the remark, it ſeews that he is unacquainted with circumſtances. The departure was neceſſary, from the experience had upon it, that the ancient courſe was a bad one. The States-General of* 1614 *were called at the commencement of the civil war in the minority of Louis XIII; but by the claſs of arranging them by orders, they increaſed the confuſion they were called to compoſe. The Author of* L'Intrigue du Cabinet *(Intrigue of the Cabinet,) who wrote before any revolution was thought of in France, ſpeaking of the States-General of* 1614, *ſays, "They held the public in ſuſpence five months; and by the queſtions agitated therein, and the heat which they were put, it appears that the Great* (les grands) *thought more to ſatisfy their* particular *paſſions, than to procure the good of the nation; and the whole time paſſed away in altercations, ceremonies, and parade."* L'Intrigue du Cabinet, vol. i. p. 322.

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their negative in that manner; and many of the biſhops and the high-beneficed clergy claimed the ſame privilege on the part of their Order.

The *Tiers Etat* (as they were then called) diſowned any knowledge of artificial Orders and artificial privileges; and they were not only reſolute on this point, but ſomewhat diſdainful. They began to conſider ariſtocracy as a kind of fungus growing out of the corruption of ſociety, that could not be admitted even as a branch of it; and from the diſpoſition the ariſtocracy had ſhewn by upholding Lettres de Cachet, and in ſundry other inſtances, it was manifeſt that no conſtitution could be formed by admitting men in any other character than as National Men.

After various altercations on this head, the Tiers Etat or Commons (as they were then called) declared themſelves (on a motion made for that purpoſe by the Abbé Sieyes) "THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION; *and that the two Orders could be conſidered but as deputies of corporations, and could only have a deliberative voice when they aſſembled in a national character with the national repreſentatives.*" This proceeding extinguiſhed the ſtile of *Etats Généraux*, or States-General, and erected it into the ſtile it now bears, that of L'Aſſemblee Nationale, or National Aſſembly.

This motion was not made in a precipitate manner: It was the reſult of cool deliberation, and concerted between the national repreſentatives and the patriotic members of the two chambers, who ſaw into the folly, miſchief, and injuſtice of artificial privileged diſtinctions. It was become evident, that no conſtitution, worthy of being called by that name, could be eſtabliſhed on any thing leſs than a national ground. The ariſtocracy had hitherto oppoſed the deſpotiſm of the Court, and affected the language of patriotiſm; but it oppoſed it as its rival (as the Engliſh Barons oppoſed King John,) and it now oppoſed the nation from the ſame motives.

On carrying this motion, the national repreſentatives, as had been concerted, ſent an invitation to the two chambers, to unite with them in a national character, and proceed to buſineſs. A majority of the clergy, chiefly of the pariſh prieſts, withdrew from the clerical chamber, and joined the nation; and forty-five from the other chamber joined in like manner. There is a ſort of ſecret hiſtory belonging to this laſt circumſtance, which is neceſſary to its explanation: It was not judged prudent that all the patriotic members of the chambers ſtiling itſelf the Nobles, ſhould quit it at once; and in conſequence of this arrangement, they drew off by degrees, always leaving ſome, as well to reaſon the caſe, as to watch the ſuſpected. In a little time, the numbers increaſed from forty-five to eighty, and ſoon after to a greater number; which, with a majority of the clergy, and the whole of the national repreſentatives, put the malcontents in a very diminutive condition.

The King, who very different from the general claſs called by that name, is a man of a good heart, ſhewed himſelf diſpoſed to recommend an union of the three chambers, on the ground the National Aſſembly had taken; but the mal-contents exerted themſelves to prevent it, and began now to have another project in view. Their numbers conſiſted of a majority of the ariſtocratical chamber, and a minority of the clerical chamber, chiefly of biſhops and high-beneficed clergy; and theſe men were determined to put every thing to iſſue, as well by ſtrength as by ſtratagem. They had no objection to a conſtitution; but it muſt be ſuch a one as themſelves ſhould dictate, and ſuited to their own views and particular ſituations. On the other hand, the Nation diſowned knowing any thing of them but as citizens, and was determined to ſhut out all ſuch up-ſtart pretenſions. The more ariſtocracy appeared, the more it was deſpiſed; there

there was a viſible imbecility and want of intellects in the majority, a ſort of *je ne ſçai quoi*, that while it affected to be more than citizen, was leſs than man. It loſt ground from contempt more than from hatred; and was rather jeered at as an aſs, than dreaded as a lion. This is the general character of ariſtocracy, or what are called Nobles, or Nobility, or rather No-ability, in all countries.

The plan of the mal-contents conſiſted now of two things; either to deliberate and vote by chambers, (or orders), more eſpecially on all queſtions reſpecting a conſtitution, (by which the ariſtocratical chamber would have had a negative on any article of the conſtitution); or, in caſe they could not accompliſh this object, to overthrow the National Aſſembly entirely.

To effect one or other of theſe objects, they began now to cultivate a friendſhip with the deſpotiſm they had hitherto attempted to rival, and the Count D'Artois became their chief. The King (who has ſince declared himſelf deceived into their meaſures) held, according to the old form, *a Bed of Juſtice*, in which he accorded to the deliberation and vote *par tête* (by head) upon ſeveral ſubjects; but reſerved the deliberation and vote upon all queſtions reſpecting a conſtitution, to the three chambers ſeparately. This declaration of the King was made againſt the advice of M. Neckar, who now began to perceive that he was growing out of faſhion at Court, and that another miniſter was in contemplation.

As the form of ſitting in ſeparate chambers was yet apparently kept up, though eſſentially deſtroyed, the national repreſentatives, immediately after this declaration of the King, reſorted to their own chambers to conſult on a proteſt againſt it; and the minority of the chamber (calling itſelf the Nobles) who had joined the national cauſe, retired to a private houſe to conſult in like manner. The mal-contents had by this time concerted their meaſures with the Court, which Count D'Artois undertook to conduct; and as they ſaw from the diſcontent which the declaration excited, and the oppoſition making againſt it, that they could not obtain a controul over the intended conſtitution by a ſeparate vote, they prepared themſelves for their final object—that of conſpiring againſt the National Aſſembly, and overthrowing it.

The next morning, the door of the chamber of the National Aſſembly was ſhut againſt them, and guarded againſt them; and the Members were refuſed admittance. On this, they withdrew to a tennis-ground in the neighbourhood of Verſailles, as the moſt convenient place they could find, and, after renewing their ſeſſion, took an oath never to ſeparate from each other, under any circumſtance whatever, death excepted, until they had eſtabliſhed a conſtitution. As the experiment of ſhutting up the houſe had no other effect than that of producing a cloſer connection in the Members, it was opened again the next day, and the public buſineſs recommenced in the uſual place.

We now are to have in view the forming of the new Miniſtry, which was to accompliſh the overthrow of the National Aſſembly. But as force would be neceſſary, orders were iſſued to aſſemble thirty thouſand troops, the command of which was given to Broglio, one of the new-intended Miniſtry, who was recalled from the country for this purpoſe. But as ſome management was neceſſary to keep this plan concealed till the moment it ſhould be ready for execution, it is to this policy that a declaration made by Count D'Artois muſt be attributed, and which is here proper to be introduced.

It could not but occur, that, while the mal-contents continued to reſort to their chambers ſeparate from the National Aſſembly, more jealouſy would be excited than if they were mixed with it, and that the plot might be ſuſpected. But, as they had taken their ground, they now wanted a pretence for

for quitting it, it was neceſſary that one ſhould be deviſed. This was effectually accompliſhed by a declaration made by Count D'Artois, "*That, if they took not a part in the National Aſſembly, the life of the King would be endangered:*" On which they quitted their chambers, and mixed with the Aſſembly in one body.

At the time this declaration was made, it was generally treated as a piece of abſurdity in Count D'Artois, and calculated merely to relieve the outſtanding Members of the two chambers from the diminutive ſituation they were put in; and, if nothing more had followed, this concluſion would have been good. But as things beſt explain themſelves by their events, this apparent union was only a cover to the machinations which were ſecretly going on; and the declaration accommodated itſelf to anſwer that purpoſe. In a little time the National Aſſembly found itſelf ſurrounded by troops, and thouſands more were daily arriving. On this, a very ſtrong declaration was made by the National Aſſembly to the King, remonſtrating on the impropriety of the meaſure, and demanding the reaſon. The King, who was not in the ſecret of this buſineſs, as himſelf afterwards declared, gave ſubſtantially for anſwer, that he had no other object in view than to preſerve the public tranquillity, which appeared to be much diſturbed.

But, in a few days from this time, the plot unravelled itſelf. M. Neckar and the Miniſtry were diſplaced, and a new one formed, of the enemies of the Revolution; and Broglio, with between twenty-five and thirty thouſand foreign troops, was arrived to ſupport them. The maſk was thrown off, and matters were come to a criſis. The event was, that, in the ſpace of three days, the new Miniſtry and their abettors found it prudent to fly the nation; the Baſtile was taken, and Broglio and his foreign troops diſperſed; as is already related in the former part of this work.

There are ſome curious circumſtances in the hiſtory of this ſhort-lived Miniſtry, and this ſhort lived attempt at a counter revolution. The palace of Verſailles, where the Court was ſitting, was not more than four hundred yards diſtant from the hall where the National Aſſembly was ſitting. The two places were, at this moment, like the ſeparate head-quarters of two combatant armies; yet the Court was as perfectly ignorant of the information which had arrived from Paris to the National Aſſembly, as if it had reſided at an hundred miles diſtance. The then Marquis de la Fayette, who, (as has already been mentioned,) was choſen to preſide in the National Aſſembly on this particular occaſion, named, by order of the Aſſembly, three ſucceſſive deputations to the King, on the day, and up to the evening on which the Baſtile was taken, to inform and confer with him on the ſtate of affairs: But the Miniſtry, who knew not ſo much as that it was attacked, precluded all communication, and were ſolacing themſelves how dexterouſly they had ſucceeded; but, in a few hours, the accounts arrived ſo thick and faſt, that they had to ſtart from their deſks and run. Some ſet off in one diſguiſe, and ſome in another, and none in their own character. Their anxiety now was to outride the news leſt they ſhould be ſtopt, which, though it flew faſt, flew not ſo faſt as themſelves.

It is worth remarking, that the National Aſſembly neither purſued thoſe fugitive conſpirators, nor took any notice of them, nor ſought to retaliate in any ſhape whatever. Occupied with eſtabliſhing a conſtitution founded on the Rights of Man and the Authority of the people, the only authority on which government has a right to exiſt in any country, the National Aſſembly felt none of thoſe mean paſſions which mark the character of impertinent governments, founding themſelves on their own authority, or the abſurdity of

hereditary

hereditary ſucceſſion. It is the faculty of the human mind to become what it contemplates, and to act in uniſon with its object.

The conſpiracy being thus diſperſed, one of the firſt works of the National Aſſembly, inſtead of vindictive proclamations, as has been the caſe with other governments, publiſhed a Declaration of the Rights of Man, as the baſis on which the new conſtitution was to be built, and which is here ſubjoined.

DECLARATION

OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND OF CITIZENS,

BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE.

" THE Repreſentatives of the people of France, formed into a National Aſſembly, conſidering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights, are the ſole cauſes of public misfortunes and corruptions of government, have reſolved to ſet forth, in a ſolemn declaration, theſe natural, impreſcriptible, and unalienable rights: That this declaration being conſtantly preſent to the minds of the members of the body ſocial, they may be ever kept attentive to their rights and their duties: That the acts of the legiſlative and executive powers of government, being capable of being every moment compared with the end of political inſtitutions, may be more reſpected: And alſo, that the future claims of the citizens, being directed by ſimple and inconteſtable principles, may always tend to the maintenance of the Conſtitution, and the general happineſs.

" For theſe reaſons, the National Aſſembly doth recognize and declare, in the preſence of the Supreme Being, and with the hope of his bleſſing and favour, the following ſacred rights of men and of citizens:

' I. Men are born, and always continue, free, and equal in reſpect of their rights. Civil diſtinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.

' II. The end of all political aſſociations is, the preſervation of the natural and impreſcriptible rights of man; and theſe rights are liberty, property, ſecurity, and reſiſtance of oppreſſion.

' III. The nation is eſſentially the ſource of all ſovereignty; nor can any individual, or any body of men, be entitled to any authority which is not expreſsly derived from it.

' IV. Political liberty conſiſts in the power of doing whatever does not injure another. The exerciſe of the natural rights of every man, has no other limits than thoſe which are neceſſary to ſecure to every other man the free exerciſe of the ſame rights; and theſe limits are determinable only by the law.

' V. The law ought to prohibit only actions hurtful to ſociety. What is not prohibited by the law, ſhould not be hindered; nor ſhould any one be compelled to that which the law does not require.

' VI. The law is an expreſſion of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to concur, either perſonally, or by their repreſentatives, in its formation. It ſhould be the ſame to all, whether it protects or puniſhes; and all being equal in its ſight, are equally eligible to all honours, places,

and employments, according to their different abilities, without any other diſtinction than that created by their virtues and talents.

'VII. No man ſhall be accuſed, arreſted, or held in confinement, except in caſes determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has preſcribed. All who promote, ſolicit, execute, or cauſe to be executed, arbitrary orders, ought to be puniſhed; and every citizen called upon, or apprehended by virtue of the law, ought immediately to obey, and renders himſelf culpable by reſiſtance.

'VIII. The law ought to impoſe no other penalties but ſuch as are abſolutely and evidently neceſſary: And no one ought to be puniſhed, but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence, and legally applied.

'IX. Every man being preſumed innocent till he has been convicted, whenever his detention becomes indiſpenſable, all rigour to him, more than is neceſſary to ſecure his perſon, ought to be provided againſt by the law.

'X. No man ought to be moleſted on account of his opinions, not even on account of his religious opinions, provided his avowal of them does not diſturb the public order eſtabliſhed by the law.

'XI. The unreſtrained communication of thoughts and opinions being one of the moſt precious rights of man, every citizen may ſpeak, write, and publiſh freely, provided he is reſponſible for the abuſe of this liberty in caſes determined by the law.

'XII. A public force being neceſſary to give ſecurity to the rights of men and of citizens, that force is inſtituted for the benefit of the community, and not for the particular benefit of the perſons with whom it is entruſted.

'XIII. A common contribution being neceſſary for the ſupport of the public force, and for defraying the other expences of government, it ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their abilities.

'XIV. Every citizen has a right, either by himſelf or his repreſentative, to a free voice in determining the neceſſity of public contributions, the appropriation of them, and their amount, mode of aſſeſſment, and duration.

'XV. Every community has a right to demand of all its agents, an account of their conduct.

'XVI. Every community in which a ſeparation of powers and a ſecurity of rights is not provided for, wants a conſtitution.

'XVII. The right to property being inviolable and ſacred, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in caſes of evident public neceſſity, legally aſcertained, and on condition of a previous juſt indemnity.'

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

THE three firſt articles comprehend, in general terms, the whole of a Declaration of Rights: All the ſucceeding articles either originate out of them, or follow as elucidations. The 4th, 5th, and 6th, define more particularly what is only generally expreſſed in the 1ſt, 2d, and 3d.

The 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th articles, are declaratory of *principles* upon which laws ſhall be conſtructed, conformable to *rights* already declared. But it is queſtioned by ſome very good people in France, as well as in other countries, whether the 10th article ſufficiently guarantees the right it is intended to accord with: Beſides which, it takes off from the divine dignity of religion, and weakens its operative force upon the mind, to make it a ſubject

of

of human laws. It then preſents itſelf to Man, like light intercepted by a cloudy medium, in which the ſource of it is obſcured from his ſight, and he ſees nothing to reverence in the duſky ray *.

The remaining articles, beginning with the 12th, are ſubſtantially contained in the principles of the preceding articles; but, in the particular ſituation in which France then was, having to undo what was wrong, as well as to ſet up what was right, it was proper to be more particular than what in another condition of things would be neceſſary.

While the Declaration of Rights was before the National Aſſembly, ſome of its members remarked, that if a Declaration of Rights was publiſhed, it ſhould be accompanied with a Declaration of Duties. The obſervation diſcovered a mind that reflected, and it only erred by not reflecting far enough. A Declaration of Rights is, by reciprocity, a Declaration of Duties alſo. Whatever is my right as a man, is alſo the right of another; and it becomes my duty to guarantee, as well as to poſſeſs.

The three firſt articles are the baſis of Liberty, as well individual as national; nor can any country be called free, whoſe government does not take its beginning from the principles they contain, and continue to preſerve them pure; and the whole of the Declaration of Rights is of more value to the world, and will do more good, than all the laws and ſtatutes that have yet been promulgated.

In the declaratory exordium which prefaces the Declaration of Rights, we ſee the ſolemn and majeſtic ſpectacle of a Nation opening its commiſſion, under the auſpices of its Creator, to eſtabliſh a government; a ſcene ſo new, and ſo tranſcendently unequalled by any thing in the European world, that the name of a Revolution is diminutive of its character, and it riſes into a Regeneration of man. What are the preſent governments of Europe, but a ſcene of iniquity and oppreſſion? What is that of England? Do not its own inhabitants ſay, It is a market where every man has his price, and where corruption is common traffic, at the expence of a deluded people? No wonder, then, that the French Revolution is traduced. Had it confined itſelf merely to the deſtruction of flagrant deſpotiſm, perhaps Mr. Burke and ſome others had been ſilent. Their cry now is, "It is gone too far:" that is, it is gone too far for them. It ſtares corruption in the face, and the venal tribe are all alarmed. Their fear diſcovers itſelf in their outrage, and they are but publiſhing the groans of a wounded vice. But from ſuch oppoſition, the French Revolution, inſtead of ſuffering, receives an homage. The more it is ſtruck, the more ſparks it will emit; and the

* *There is a ſingle idea, which, if it ſtrikes rightly upon the mind either in a legal or a religious ſenſe, will prevent any man, or any body of men, or any government, from going wrong on the ſubject of Religion; which is, that before any human inſtitutions of government were known in the world, there exiſted, if I may ſo expreſs it, a compact between God and Man, from the beginning of time; and that as the relation and condition which man in his* individual perſon *ſtands in towards his Maker, cannot be changed, or any-ways altered by any human laws or human authority, that religious devotion, which is a part of this compact, cannot ſo much as be made a ſubject of human laws; and that all laws muſt conform themſelves to this prior exiſting compact, and not aſſume to make the compact conform to the laws, which, beſides being human, are ſubſequent thereto. The firſt act of man, when he looked around and ſaw himſelf a creature which he did not make, and a world furniſhed for his reception, muſt have been devotion, and devotion muſt ever continue ſacred to every individual man,* as it appears right to him; *and governments do miſchief by interfering.*

fear is, it will not be ſtruck enough. It has nothing to dread from attacks: Truth has given it an eſtabliſhment; and Time will record it with a name as laſting as his own.

Having now traced the progreſs of the French Revolution through moſt of its principal ſtages, from its commencement, to the taking of the Baſtille, and its eſtabliſhment, by the Declaration of Rights, I will cloſe the ſubject with the energetic apoſtrophe of M. de la Fayette—"May this great monument, raiſed to Liberty, ſerve as a leſſon to the oppreſſor, and an example to the oppreſſed*!"

MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER.

TO prevent interrupting the argument in the preceding part of this work, or the narrative that follows it, I reſerved ſome obſervations to be thrown together into a Miſcellaneous Chapter; by which variety might not be cenſured for confuſion. Mr. Burke's Book is *all* Miſcellany. His intention was to make an attack on the French Revolution; but inſtead of proceeding with an orderly arrangement, he has ſtormed it with a mob of ideas tumbling over and deſtroying one another.

But this confuſion and contradiction in Mr. Burke's Book is eaſily accounted for.—When a man in a long cauſe attempts to ſteer his courſe by any thing elſe than ſome polar truth or principle, he is ſure to be loſt. It is beyond the compaſs of his capacity to keep all the parts of an argument together, and make them unite in one iſſue, by any other means than having this guide always in view. Neither memory nor invention will ſupply the want of it. The former fails him, and the latter betrays him.

Notwithſtanding the nonſenſe, for it deſerves no better name, that Mr. Burke has aſſerted about hereditary rights, and hereditary ſucceſſion, and that a Nation has not a right to form a Government for itſelf; it happened to fall in his way to give ſome account of what Government is. "*Government*, ſays he, *is a contrivance of human wiſdom.*"

Admitting that Government is a contrivance of human *wiſdom*, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that hereditary ſucceſſion, and hereditary rights (as they are called), can make no part of it, becauſe it is impoſſible to make wiſdom hereditary; and on the other hand, *that* cannot be a wiſe contrivance, which in its operation may commit the government of a nation to the wiſdom of an ideot. The ground which Mr. Burke now takes, is fatal to every part of his cauſe. The argument changes from hereditary rights to hereditary wiſdom; and the queſtion is, Who is the wiſeſt man? He muſt now ſhew that every one in the line of hereditary ſucceſſion was a Solomon, or his title is not good to be a king.—What a ſtroke has Mr. Burke now made! To uſe a ſailor's phraſe, he has *ſwabbed the deck*, and ſcarcely left a name legible in the liſt of Kings; and he has mowed down and thinned the Houſe of Peers, with a ſcythe as formidable as Death and Time.

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* *See page* 10 *of this work.—N. B. Since the taking of the Baſtille, the occurrences have been publiſhed: But the matters recorded in this narrative are prior to that period; and ſome of them, as may be eaſily ſeen, can be but very little known.*

But

But Mr. Burke appears to have been aware of this retort; and he has taken care to guard againſt it, by making government to be not only a *contrivance* of human wiſdom, but a *monopoly* of wiſdom. He puts the nation as fools on one ſide, and places his government of wiſdom, all wiſe men of Gotham, on the other ſide; and he then proclaims, and ſays, that "*Men have a* RIGHT *that their* WANTS *ſhould be provided for by this wiſdom.*" Having thus made proclamation, he next proceeds to explain to them what their *wants* are, and alſo what their *rights* are. In this he has ſucceeded dextrouſly, for he makes their wants to be a want of wiſdom; but as this is but cold comfort, he then informs them, that they have a *right* (not to any of the wiſdom) but to be governed by it: And in order to impreſs them with a ſolemn reverence for this monopoly government of wiſdom, and of its vaſt capacity for all purpoſes, poſſible or impoſſible, right or wrong, he proceeds with aſtrological myſterious importance, to tell them its powers, in theſe words—"The Rights of men in government are their advantages; and theſe are often in balances between differences of good; and in compromiſes ſometimes between *good* and *evil*, and ſometimes between *evil* and *evil*. Political reaſon is a *computing principle*; adding—ſubtracting—multiplying—and dividing, morally, and not metaphyſically, or mathematically, true moral demonſtrations."

As the wondering audience whom Mr. Burke ſuppoſes himſelf talking to, may not underſtand all this learned jargon, I will undertake to be its interpreter. The meaning then, good people, of all this is, *That government is governed by no principle whatever; that it can make evil good, or good evil, juſt as it pleaſes. In ſhort, that government is arbitrary power.*

But there are ſome things which Mr. Burke has forgotten. *Firſt*, He has not ſhewn where the wiſdom originally came from: And *ſecondly*, he has not ſhewn by what authority it firſt began to act. In the manner he introduces the matter, it is either government ſtealing wiſdom, or wiſdom ſtealing government. It is without an origin, and its powers without authority. In ſhort, it is uſurpation.

Whether it be from a ſenſe of ſhame, or from a conſciouſneſs of ſome radical defect in a government neceſſary to be kept out of ſight, or from both, or from any other cauſe, I undertake not to determine; but ſo it is, that a monarchical reaſoner never traces government to its ſource, or from its ſource. It is one of the *ſhibboleths* by which he may be known. A thouſand years hence, thoſe who ſhall live in America or in France, will look back with contemplative pride on the origin of their governments, and ſay, *This was the work of our glorious anceſtors!* But what can a monarchical talker ſay? What has he to exult in? Alas! he has nothing. A certain ſomething forbids him to look back to a beginning, leſt ſome robber, or ſome Robin Hood, ſhould riſe from the long obſcurity of time, and ſay, *I am the origin!*

The opinions of men with reſpect to government are changing faſt in all countries. The revolutions of America and France have thrown a beam of light over the world which reaches into man. The enormous expences of governments have provoked people to think, by making them feel: And when once the veil begins to rend, it admits not of repair. Ignorance is of a peculiar nature: Once diſpelled, it is impoſſible to re-eſtabliſh it. It is not originally a thing of itſelf, but is only the abſence of knowledge; and though man may be *kept* ignorant, he cannot be *made* ignorant. The mind, in diſcovering truth, acts in the ſame manner as it acts through the eye in diſcovering objects; when once any object has been ſeen, it is impoſſible to put the mind back to the ſame condition it was in before it

ſaw it. Thoſe who talk of a counter-revolution in France, ſhew how little they underſtand of man. There does not exiſt in the compaſs of language an arrangement of words to expreſs ſo much as the means of effecting a counter-revolution. The means muſt be an obliteration of knowledge; and it has never yet been diſcovered, how to make man *unknow* his knowledge, or *unthink* his thoughts.

Mr. Burke is labouring in vain to ſtop the progreſs of knowledge; and it comes with the worſe grace from him, as there is a certain tranſaction known in the city, which renders him ſuſpected of being a penſioner in a fictitious name. This may account for ſome ſtrange doctrine he has advanced in his book, which, though he points it at the Revolution Society, is effectually directed againſt the whole nation.

"The King of England," ſays he, "holds *his* Crown" (for it does not belong to the nation, according to Mr. Burke) "in *contempt* of the choice "of the Revolution Society, who have not a ſingle vote for a King among "them, either *individually* or *collectively*; and his Majeſty's heirs, each in "their time and order, will come to the Crown *with the ſame contempt* of "their choice, with which his Majeſty has ſucceeded to that which he "now wears."

As to who is King in England or elſewhere, or whether there is any King at all, or whether the people chuſe a Cherokee Chief, or a Heſſian Huſſar for a King, it is not a matter that I trouble myſelf about—be that to themſelves; but with reſpect to the doctrine, ſo far as it relates to the Rights of Men and Nations, it is as abominable as any thing ever uttered in the moſt enſlaved country under heaven. Whether it ſounds worſe to my ear, by not being accuſtomed to hear ſuch deſpotiſm, than what it does to the ear of another perſon, I am not ſo well a judge of; but of its abominable principle I am at no loſs to judge.

It is not the Revolution Society that Mr. Burke means; it is the Nation, as well in its *original*, as in its *repreſentative* character; and he has taken care to make himſelf underſtood, by ſaying that they have not a vote either *collectively* or *individually*. The Revolution Society is compoſed of citizens of all denominations, and of members of both the Houſes of Parliament; and conſequently if there is not a right to a vote in any of the characters, there can be no right to any, either in the nation, or in its parliament. This ought to be a caution to every country, how it imports foreign families to be kings. It is ſomewhat curious to obſerve, that although the people of England have been in the habit of talking about kings, it is always a foreign houſe of kings; hating foreigners, yet governed by them.

It has hitherto been the practice of the Engliſh Parliaments to regulate what was called the ſucceſſion, (taking it for granted, that the nation then continued to accord to the form of annexing a monarchical branch to its government; for without this, the parliament could not have had authority to have ſent either to Holland or to Hanover, or to impoſe a king upon the nation againſt its will.) And this muſt be the utmoſt limit to which parliament can go upon the caſe; but the right of the nation goes to the *whole* caſe, becauſe it has a right of changing its *whole* form of government. The right of a parliament is only a right in truſt, a right by delegation, and that but from a very ſmall part of the nation; and one of its houſes has not even this. But the right of the nation is an original right, as univerſal as taxation. The nation is the pay-maſter of every thing, and every thing muſt conform to its general will.

I remember taking notice of a ſpeech in what is called the Engliſh Houſe of

of Peers, by the then Earl of Shelburne, and I think it was at the time he was miniſter, which is applicable to this caſe. I do not directly charge my memory with every particular; but the words and the purport, as nearly as I remember, were theſe: *That the form of a Government was a matter wholly at the will of a nation, at all times: That if it choſe a monarchical form, it had a right to have it ſo; and if it afterwards choſe to be a Republic, it had a right to be a Republic, and to ſay to a King, 'We have no longer any occaſion for you.'*

When Mr. Burke ſays that "His Majeſty's heirs and ſucceſſors, each in "their time and order, will come to the crown with the *ſame contempt* of "their choice with which His Majeſty has ſucceeded to that he wears," it is ſaying too much even to the humbleſt individual in the country; part of whoſe daily labour goes towards making up the million ſterling per year, which the country gives the perſon it ſtyles a King. Government with inſolence, is deſpotiſm; but when contempt is added, it becomes worſe; and to pay for contempt, is the exceſs of ſlavery. This ſpecies of government comes from Germany; and reminds we of what one of the Brunſwick ſoldiers told me, who was taken priſoner by the Americans in the late war: "Ah!" ſaid he, "America is a fine free country, it is worth the people's "fighting for; I know the difference by knowing my own: In my country, "if the prince ſays, Eat ſtraw, we eat ſtraw." God help that country, thought I, be it England or elſewhere, whoſe liberties are to be protected by German principles of government, and Princes of Brunſwick!

As Mr. Burke ſometimes ſpeaks of England, ſometimes of France, and ſometimes of the world, and of government in general, it is difficult to anſwer his book without apparently meeting him on the ſame ground. Although principles of government are general ſubjects, it is next to impoſſible in many caſes to ſeparate them from the idea of place and circumſtance; and more ſo when circumſtances are put for arguments, which is frequently the caſe with Mr. Burke.

In the former part of his book, addreſſing himſelf to the people of France, he ſays, "No experience has taught us" (meaning the Engliſh), "that in "any other courſe or method than that of an *hereditary crown*, can our liber-"ties be regularly perpetuated and preſerved ſacred as our *hereditary right*." I aſk Mr. Burke, who is to take them away?—M. de la Fayette, in ſpeaking to France, ſays, "*For a nation to be free, it is ſufficient that ſhe wills it.*" But Mr. Burke repreſents England as wanting capacity to take care of itſelf, and that its liberties muſt be taken care of by a King holding it in "con-"tempt." If England is ſunk to this, it is preparing itſelf to eat ſtraw, as in Hanover or in Brunſwick. But beſides the folly of the declaration, it happens that the facts are all againſt Mr. Burke. It was by the government *being hereditary*, that the liberties of the people were endangered. Charles I. and James II. are inſtances of this truth; yet neither of them went ſo far as to hold the nation in contempt.

As it is ſometimes of advantage to the people of one country, to hear what thoſe of other countries have to ſay reſpecting it, it is poſſible that the people of France may learn ſomething from Mr. Burke's book, and that the people of England may alſo learn ſomething from the anſwers it will occaſion. When nations fall out about freedom, a wide field of debate is opened. The argument commences with the rights of war, without its evils; and as knowledge is the object contended for, the party that ſuſtains the defeat obtains the prize.

Mr. Burke talks about what he calls an hereditary crown, as if it were ſome production of nature; or as if, like time, it had a power to operate, not

not only independently, but in ſpite of man; or as if it were a thing or a ſubject univerſally conſented to. Alas! it has none of thoſe properties, but is the reverſe of them all. It is a thing in imagination, the propriety of which is more than doubted, and the legality of which in a few years will be denied.

But, to arrange this matter in a clearer view than what general expreſſions can convey, it will be neceſſary to ſtate the diſtinct heads under which (what is called) an hereditary crown, or, more properly ſpeaking, an hereditary ſucceſſion to the government of a nation, can be conſidered; which are,

Firſt, The right of a particular Family to eſtabliſh itſelf:

Secondly, The right of a nation to eſtabliſh a particular Family.

With reſpect to the *firſt* of theſe heads, that of a Family eſtabliſhing itſelf with hereditary powers on its own authority, and independent of the conſent of a nation, all men will concur in calling it deſpotiſm; and it would be treſpaſſing on their underſtanding to attempt to prove it.

But the *ſecond* head, that of a nation eſtabliſhing a particular Family with *hereditary powers*, does not preſent itſelf as deſpotiſm on the firſt reflection; but if men will permit a ſecond reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward but one remove out of their own perſons to that of their offſpring, they will then ſee that hereditary ſucceſſion becomes in its conſequences the ſame deſpotiſm to others, which they reprobated for themſelves. It operates to preclude the conſent of the ſucceeding generation; and the preclusion of conſent is deſpotiſm. When the perſon who at any time ſhall be in poſſeſſion of a government, or thoſe who ſtand in ſucceſſion to him, ſhall ſay to a nation, I hold this power in 'contempt' of you, it ſignifies not on what authority he pretends to ſay it. It is no relief, but an aggravation to a perſon in ſlavery, to reflect that he was ſold by his parent; and as that which heightens the criminality of an act cannot be produced to prove the legality of it, hereditary ſucceſſion cannot be eſtabliſhed as a legal thing.

In order to arrive at a more perfect deciſion on this head, it will be proper to conſider the generation which undertakes to eſtabliſh a Family with *hereditary powers*, apart and ſeparate from the generations which are to follow; and alſo to conſider the character in which the *firſt* generation acts with reſpect to ſucceeding generations.

The generation which firſt ſelects a perſon and puts him at the head of its government, either with the title of King, or any other diſtinction, acts its *own choice*, be it wiſe or fooliſh, as a free agent for itſelf. The perſon ſo ſet up is not hereditary, but ſelected and appointed; and the generation who ſets him up, does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and eſtabliſhment. Were the generation who ſets him up, and the people ſo ſet up, to live for ever, it never could become hereditary ſucceſſion; and of conſequence, hereditary ſucceſſion can only follow on the death of the firſt parties.

As therefore hereditary ſucceſſion is out of the queſtion with reſpect to the *firſt* generation, we have now to conſider the character in which *that* generation acts with reſpect to the commencing generation, and to all ſucceeding ones.

It aſſumes a character to which it has neither right nor title. It changes itſelf from a *Legiſlator* to a *Teſtator*, and affects to make its Will, which is to have operation after the demiſe of the makers, to bequeath the government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to eſtabliſh on the ſucceeding

ceeding generation, a new and different form of government under which itſelf lived. Itſelf, as is already obſerved, lived not under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and eſtabliſhment; and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and teſtament (which it had not authority to make), to take from the commencing generation, and all future ones, the rights and free agency by which itſelf acted.

But, excluſive of the right which any generation has to act collectively as a teſtator, the objects to which it applies itſelf in this caſe, are not within the compaſs of any law, or of any will or teſtament.

The rights of men in ſociety are neither deviſeable, nor transferable, nor annihilable, but are deſcendable only; and it is not in the power of any generation to intercept finally, and cut off the deſcent. If the preſent generation, or any other, are diſpoſed to be ſlaves, it does not leſſen the right of the ſucceeding generation to be free: Wrongs cannot have a legal deſcent. When Mr. Burke attempts to maintain, that the *Engliſh nation did, at the revolution of* 1688, *moſt ſolemnly renounce and abdicate their rights for themſelves, and for all their poſterity for ever;* he ſpeaks a language that merits not reply, and which can only excite contempt for his proſtitute principles, or pity for his ignorance.

In whatever light hereditary ſucceſſion, as growing out of the will and teſtament of ſome former generation, preſents itſelf, it is an abſurdity. A cannot make a will to take from B the property of B, and give it to C; yet this is the manner in which (what is called) hereditary ſucceſſion by law operates. A certain former generation made a will, to take away the rights of the commencing generation, and all future ones, and convey thoſe rights to a third perſon, who afterwards comes forward, and tells them, in Mr. Burke's language, that they have *no rights*, that their rights are already bequeathed to him, and that he will govern in *contempt* of them. From ſuch principles, and ſuch ignorance, good Lord deliver the world!

But, after all, what is this metaphor called a crown, or rather what is monarchy? Is it a thing, or is it a name, or is it a fraud? Is it "a "contrivance of human wiſdom," or of human craft, to obtain money from a nation under ſpecious pretences? Is it a thing neceſſary to a nation? If it is, in what does that neceſſity conſiſt, what ſervices does it perform, what is its buſineſs, and what are its merits? Doth the virtue conſiſt in the metaphor, or in the man? Doth the goldſmith that makes the crown, make the virtue alſo? Doth it operate like Fortunatus's wiſhing cap, or Harlequin's wooden ſword? Doth it make a man a conjuror? In fine, what is it? It appears to be a ſomething going much out of faſhion, falling into ridicule, and rejected in ſome countries both as unneceſſary and expenſive. In America it is conſidered as an abſurdity; and in France it has ſo far declined, that the goodneſs of the man, and the reſpect for his perſonal character, are the only things that preſerve the appearance of its exiſtence.

If government be what Mr. Burke deſcribes it, "a contrivance of human "wiſdom," I might aſk him, if wiſdom was at ſuch a low ebb in England, that it was become neceſſary to import it from Holland and from Hanover? But I will do the country the juſtice to ſay, that was not the caſe; and even if it was, it miſtook the cargo. The wiſdom of every country, when properly exerted, is ſufficient for all its purpoſes; and there could exiſt no more real occaſion in England to have ſent for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector, than there was in America to have done a ſimilar thing. If a country does not underſtand its own affairs, how is a foreigner to underſtand them, who knows neither its laws, its manners, nor its language?

language? If there exiſted a man ſo tranſcendently wiſe above all others, that his wiſdom was neceſſary to inſtruct a nation, ſome reaſon might be offered for monarchy; but when we caſt our eyes about a country, and obſerve how every part underſtands its own affairs; and when we look around the world, and ſee that of all men in it, the race of kings are the moſt inſignificant in capacity, our reaſon cannot fail to aſk us—What are thoſe men kept for?

If there is any thing in monarchy which we people of America do not underſtand, I wiſh Mr. Burke would be ſo kind as to inform us. I ſee in America, a government extending over a country ten times as large as England, and conducted with regularity, for a fortieth part of the expence which government coſts in England. If I aſk a man in America, if he wants a King; he retorts, and aſks me if I take him for an ideot? How is it that this difference happens? Are we more or leſs wiſe than others? I ſee in America, the generality of people living in a ſtyle of plenty unknown in monarchical countries; and I ſee that the principle of its government, which is that of the *equal Rights of Man*, is making a rapid progreſs in the world.

If monarchy is a uſeleſs thing, why is it kept up any-where? and if a neceſſary thing, how can it be diſpenſed with? That *civil government* is neceſſary, all civilized nations will agree; but civil government is republican government. All that part of the government of England, which begins with the office of conſtable, and proceeds through the department of magiſtrate, quarter-ſeſſion, and general aſſize, including trial by jury, is republican government. Nothing of monarchy appears in any part of it, except the name which William the Conqueror impoſed upon the Engliſh, that of obliging them to call him "Their Sovereign Lord the "King."

It is eaſy to conceive, that a band of intereſted men, ſuch as Placemen, Penſioners, Lords of the bed-chamber, Lords of the kitchen, Lords of the neceſſary-houſe, and the Lord knows what beſides, can find as many reaſons for monarchy as their ſalaries, paid at the expence of the country, amount to; but if I aſk the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradeſman, and down, through all the occupations of life, to the common labourer, what ſervice monarchy is to him? he can give me no anſwer. If I aſk him what monarchy is, he believes it is ſomething like a ſinecure.

Notwithſtanding the taxes of England amount to almoſt ſeventeen millions a year, ſaid to be for the expences of government, it is ſtill evident that the ſenſe of the nation is left to govern itſelf, and does govern itſelf by magiſtrates and juries, almoſt at its own charge, on republican principles, excluſive of the expence of taxes. The ſalaries of the judges are almoſt the only charge that is paid out of the revenue. Conſidering that all the internal government is executed by the people, the taxes of England ought to be the lighteſt of any nation in Europe; inſtead of which, they are the contrary. As this cannot be accounted for on the ſcore of civil government, the ſubject neceſſarily extends itſelf to the monarchical part.

There never was a time when it became the Engliſh to watch continental intrigues more circumſpectly than at the preſent moment, and to diſtinguiſh the politics of the Electorate from the politics of the Nation. The revolution of France has entirely changed the ground with reſpect to England and France, as nations: But the German deſpots, with Pruſſia at their head, are combining againſt Liberty; and the fondneſs of Mr. Pitt for office, and the intereſt

intereſt which all his family connections have obtained, do not give ſufficient ſecurity againſt this intrigue.

As every thing which paſſes in the world becomes matter for hiſtory, I will now quit this ſubject, and take a conciſe review of the ſtate of the parties and politics in England, as Mr. Burke has done in France,

Whether the preſent reign commenced with contempt, I leave to Mr. Burke: Certain however it is, that it had ſtrongly that appearance. The animoſity of the Engliſh Nation, it is very well remembered, ran high; and, had the true principles of Liberty been as well underſtood then as they now promiſe to be, it is probable the nation would not have patiently ſubmitted to ſo much. George the Firſt and Second were ſenſible of a rival in the remains of the Stuarts; and as they could not but conſider themſelves as ſtanding on their good behaviour, they had prudence to keep their German principles of government to themſelves; but as the Stuart family wore away, the prudence became leſs neceſſary.

The conteſt between rights, and what were called prerogatives, continued to heat the nation till ſome time after the concluſion of the American War, when all at once it fell a calm—Execration exchanged itſelf for applauſe, and Court popularity ſprung up like a muſhroom in a night.

To account for this ſudden tranſition, it is proper to obſerve, that there are two diſtinct ſpecies of popularity; the one excited by merit, the other by reſentment. As the Nation had formed itſelf into two parties, and each was extolling the merits of its parliamentary champions for and againſt prerogative, nothing could operate to give a more general ſhock than an immediate coalition of the champions themſelves. The partiſans of each being thus ſuddenly left in the lurch, and mutually heated with diſguſt at the meaſure, felt no other relief than uniting in a common execration againſt both. A higher ſtimulus of reſentment being thus excited, than what the conteſt on prerogatives had occaſioned, the Nation quitted all former objects of rights and wrongs, and ſought only that of gratification. The indignation at the Coalition ſo effectually ſuperſeded the indignation againſt the Court, as to extinguiſh it; and without any change of principles on the part of the Court, the ſame people who had reprobated its deſpotiſm, united with it, to revenge themſelves on the Coalition Parliament. The caſe was not, which they liked beſt,—but, which they hated moſt; and the leaſt hated paſſed for love. The diſſolution of the Coalition Parliament, as it afforded the means of gratifying the reſentment of the Nation, could not fail to be popular; and from hence aroſe the popularity of the Court.

Tranſitions of this kind exhibit a Nation under the government of temper, inſtead of a fixed and ſteady principle, and having once committed itſelf, however raſhly, it feels itſelf urged along to juſtify by continuance its firſt proceeding.—Meaſures, which at other times it would cenſure, it now approves; and acts perſuaſion upon itſelf to ſuffocate its judgment.

On the return of a new Parliament, the new Miniſter, Mr. Pitt, found himſelf in a ſecure majority: And the nation gave him credit, not out of regard to himſelf, but becauſe it had reſolved to do it out of reſentment to another.—He introduced himſelf to public notice by a propoſed Reform of Parliament, which in its operation would have amounted to a public juſtification of corruption. The Nation was to be at the expence of buying up the rotten boroughs, whereas it ought to puniſh the perſons who deal in the traffic.

Paſſing over the two bubbles, of the Dutch buſineſs, and the million a year to ſink the national debt; the matter which moſt preſents itſelf, is the affair of the Regency. Never, in the courſe of my obſervation, was deluſion

more ſucceſsfully acted, nor a nation more completely deceived.—But, to make this appear, it will be neceſſary to go over the circumſtances.

Mr. Fox had ſtated in the Houſe of Commons, that the Prince of Wales, as heir in ſucceſſion, had a right in himſelf to aſſume the government. This was oppoſed by Mr. Pitt; and, ſo far as the oppoſition was confined to the doctrine, it was juſt. But the principles which Mr. Pitt maintained on the contrary ſide, were as bad, or worſe in their extent, than thoſe of Mr. Fox; becauſe they went to eſtabliſh an ariſtocracy over the nation, and over the ſmall repreſentation it has in the Houſe of Commons.

Whether the Engliſh form of government be good or bad, is not in this caſe the queſtion; but, taking it as it ſtands, without regard to its merits or demerits, Mr. Pitt was farther from the point than Mr. Fox.

It is ſuppoſed to conſiſt of three parts:—While, therefore, the Nation is diſpoſed to continue this form, the parts have a *national ſtanding* independent of each other, and are not the creatures of each other. Had Mr. Fox paſſed through Parliament, and ſaid, that the perſon alluded to claimed on the ground of the Nation, Mr. Pitt muſt then have contended (what he called) the right of the Parliament againſt the right of the Nation.

By the appearance which the conteſt made, Mr. Fox took the hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt the parliamentary ground; but the fact is, they both took hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt took the worſt of the two.

What is called the Parliament is made up of two houſes; one of which is more hereditary, and more beyond the controul of the Nation, than what the Crown (as it is called) is ſuppoſed to be. It is an hereditary ariſtocracy, aſſuming and aſſerting indefeaſible, irrevocable rights and authority wholly independent of the Nation. Where, then, was the merited popularity of exalting this hereditary power over another hereditary power leſs independent of the Nation than what itſelf aſſumed to be, and of abſorbing the rights of the Nation into a houſe, over which it has neither election nor controul?

The general impulſe of the Nation was right: But it acted without reflection. It approved the oppoſition made to the right ſet up by Mr. Fox, without perceiving that Mr. Pitt was ſupporting another indefeaſible right, more remote from the Nation, in oppoſition to it.

With reſpect to the Houſe of Commons, it is elected but by a ſmall part of the nation; but were the election as univerſal as taxation, which it ought to be, it would ſtill be only the organ of the Nation, and cannot poſſeſs inherent rights. When the National Aſſembly of France reſolves a matter, the reſolve is made in right of the Nation; but Mr. Pitt on all national queſtions, ſo far as they refer to the Houſe of Commons, abſorbs the rights of the Nation into the organ, and makes the organ into a nation, and the Nation itſelf into a cypher.

In a few words, the queſtion on the Regency was a queſtion on a million a-year, which is appropriated to the executive department, and Mr. Pitt could not poſſeſs himſelf of any management of this ſum, without ſetting up the ſupremacy of Parliament; and when this was accompliſhed, it was indifferent who ſhould be Regent, as he muſt be Regent at his own coſt. Among the curioſities which this contentious debate afforded, was that of making the Great Seal into a King; the affixing of which to an act, was to be royal authority. If, therefore, Royal Authority

thority is a Great Seal, it conſequently is in itſelf nothing; and a good conſtitution would be of infinitely more value to the nation, than what the three nominal powers, as they now ſtand, are worth.

The continual uſe of the word *Conſtitution* in the Engliſh Parliament, ſhews there is none, and that the whole is merely a form of Government without a Conſtitution, and conſtituting itſelf with what powers it pleaſes. If there were a Conſtitution, it certainly could be referred to; and the debate on any conſtitutional point would terminate by producing the Conſtitution. One member ſays, This is Conſtitution; another ſays, That is Conſtitution—To-day it is one thing; and to-morrow it is ſomething elſe, while the maintaining the debate proves there is none. Conſtitution is now the cant word of Parliament tuning itſelf to the ear of the nation. Formerly it was the *univerſal Jupremacy of Parliament*—the *omnipotence of Parliament*: But ſince the progreſs of Liberty in France, thoſe phraſes have a deſpotic harſhneſs in their note; and the Engliſh Parliament have catched the faſhion from the National Aſſembly, but without the ſubſtance, of ſpeaking of *Conſtitution*.

As the preſent generation of people in England did not make the Government, they are not accountable for any of its defects; but that ſooner or later it muſt come into their hands to undergo a conſtitutional reformation, is as certain as that the ſame thing has happened in France. If France, with a revenue of nearly twenty-four millions ſterling, with an extent of rich and fertile country above four times larger than England, with a population of twenty-four millions of inhabitants to ſupport taxation, with upwards of ninety millions ſterling of gold and ſilver circulating in the nation, and with a debt leſs than the preſent debt of England—ſtill found it neceſſary, from whatever cauſe, to come to a ſettlement of its affairs, it ſolves the problem of funding for both countries.

It is out of the queſtion to ſay how long what is called the Engliſh Conſtitution has laſted, and to argue from thence how long it is to laſt; the queſtion is, how long can the funding ſyſtem laſt? It is a thing but of modern invention, and has not yet continued beyond the life of a man; yet in that ſhort ſpace it has ſo far accumulated, that, together with the current expences, it requires an amount of taxes at leaſt equal to the whole landed rental of the nation in acres to defray the annual expenditure. That a government could not always have gone on by the ſame ſyſtem which has been followed for the laſt ſeventy years, muſt be evident to every man; and for the ſame reaſon it cannot always go on.

The funding ſyſtem is not money; neither is it, properly ſpeaking, credit. It in effect creates upon paper the ſum which it appears to borrow, and lays on a tax to keep the imaginary capital alive by the payment of intereſt, and ſends the annuity to market, to be ſold for paper already in circulation. If any credit is given, it is to the diſpoſition of the people to pay the tax, and not to the Government which lays it on. When this diſpoſition expires, what is ſuppoſed to be the credit of Government expires with it. The inſtance of France under the former Government, ſhews that it is impoſſible to compel the payment of taxes by force, when a whole nation is determined to take its ſtand upon that ground.

Mr. Burke, in his review of the finances of France, ſtates the quantity of gold and ſilver in France, at about eighty-eight millions ſterling. In doing this, he has, I preſume, divided by the difference of exchange, inſtead of the ſtandard of twenty-four livres to a pound ſterling; for M. Neckar's ſtatement, from which Mr. Burke's is taken, is *two thouſand two hundred*

millions of livres, which is upwards of ninety-one millions and an half ſterling.

M. Neckar in France, and Mr. George Chalmers of the office of Trade and Plantation in England, of which Lord Hawkeſbury is preſident, publiſhed nearly about the ſame time (1786) an account of the quantity of money in each nation, from the returns of the Mint of each nation. Mr. Chalmers, from the returns of the Engliſh Mint at the Tower of London, ſtates the quantity of money in England, including Scotland and Ireland, to be twenty millions ſterling*.

M. Neckar † ſays, that the amount of money in France, recoined from the old coin which was called in, was two thouſand five hundred millions of livres, (upwards of one hundred and four millions ſterling;) and after deducting for waſte, and what may be in the Weſt-Indies, and other poſſible circumſtances, ſtates the circulating quantity at home to be ninety-one millions and an half ſterling; but taking it as Mr. Burke has put it, it is ſixty-eight millions more than the national quantity in England.

That the quantity of money in France cannot be under this ſum, may at once be ſeen from the ſtate of the French revenue, without referring to the records of the French Mint for proofs. The revenue of France prior to the Revolution, was nearly twenty-four millions ſterling; and as paper had then no exiſtence in France, the whole revenue was collected upon gold and ſilver; and it would have been impoſſible to have collected ſuch a quantity of revenue upon a leſs national quantity than M. Neckar has ſtated. Before the eſtabliſhment of paper in England, the revenue was about a fourth part of the national amount of gold and ſilver, as may be known by referring to the revenue prior to King William, and the quantity of money ſtated to be in the nation at that time, which was nearly as much as it is now.

It can be of no real ſervice to a nation, to impoſe upon itſelf, or to permit itſelf to be impoſed upon; but the prejudices of ſome, and the impoſition of others, have always repreſented France as a nation poſſeſſing but little money —whereas the quantity is not only more than four times what the quantity is in England, but is conſiderably greater on a proportion of numbers. To account for this deficiency on the part of England, ſome reference ſhould be had to the Engliſh ſyſtem of funding. It operates to multiply paper, and to ſubſtitute it in the room of money, in various ſhapes; and the more paper is multiplied, the more opportunities are afforded to export the ſpecie; and it admits of a poſſibility (by extending it to ſmall notes) of increaſing paper till there is no money left.

I know this is not a pleaſant ſubject to Engliſh readers; but the matters I am going to mention, are ſo important in themſelves, as to require the attention of men intereſted in money-tranſactions of a public nature.—There is a circumſtance ſtated by M. Neckar, in his treatiſe on the Adminiſtration of the Finances, which has never been attended to in England, but which forms the only baſis whereon to eſtimate the quantity of money (gold and ſilver) which ought to be in every nation in Europe, to preſerve a relative proportion with other nations.

Liſbon and Cadiz are the two ports into which (money) gold and ſilver from South America are imported, and which afterwards divides and ſpreads itſelf over Europe by means of commerce, and increaſes the quantity of money

* *See* Eſtimate of the Comparative Strength of Great Britain, *by G. Chalmers.*

† *See Adminiſtration of the Finances of France, Vol. III, by M. Neckar.*

in all parts of Europe. If, therefore, the amount of the annual importation into Europe can be known, and the relative proportion of the foreign commerce of the ſeveral nations by which it is diſtributed can be aſcertained, they give a rule, ſufficiently true, to aſcertain the quantity of money which ought to be found in any nation, at any given time.

M. Neckar ſhews from the regiſters of Liſbon and Cadiz, that the importation of gold and ſilver into Europe is five millions ſterling annually. He has not taken it on a ſingle year, but on an average of fifteen ſucceeding years, from 1763 to 1777, both incluſive; in which time, the amount was one thouſand eight hundred million livres, which is ſeventy-five millions ſterling *.

From the commencement of the Hanover ſucceſſion in 1714, to the time Mr. Chalmers publiſhed, is ſeventy-two years; and the quantity imported into Europe, in that time, would be three hundred and ſixty millions ſterling.

If the foreign commerce of Great-Britain be ſtated at a ſixth part of what the whole foreign commerce of Europe amounts to, (which is probably an inferior eſtimation to what the gentlemen at the Exchange would allow,) the proportion which Britain ſhould draw by commerce of this ſum, to keep herſelf on a proportion with the reſt of Europe, would be alſo a ſixth part, which is ſixty millions ſterling; and if the ſame allowance for waſte and accident be made for England which M. Neckar makes for France, the quantity remaining after theſe deductions would be fifty-two millions; and this ſum ought to have been in the nation (at the time Mr. Chalmers publiſhed) in addition to the ſum which was in the nation at the commencement of the Hanover ſucceſſion, and to have made in the whole at leaſt ſixty-ſix millions ſterling; inſtead of which, there were but twenty millions, which is forty-ſix millions below its proportionate quantity.

As the quantity of gold and ſilver imported into Liſbon and Cadiz is more exactly aſcertained than that of any commodity imported into England; and as the quantity of money coined at the Tower of London is ſtill more poſitively known; the leading facts do not admit of controverſy. Either, therefore, the commerce of England is unproductive of profit, or the gold and ſilver which it brings in, leak continually away by unſeen means, at the average rate of about three quarters of a million a-year, which, in the courſe of ſeventy-two years, accounts for the deficiency; and its abſence is ſupplied by paper †.

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* *Adminiſtration of the Finances of France, Vol. III.*

† *Whether the Engliſh commerce does not bring in money, or whether the Government ſends it out after it is brought in, is a matter which the parties concerned can beſt explain; but that the deficiency exiſts, is not in the power of either to diſprove. While Dr. Price, Mr. Eden (now Aukland), Mr. Chalmers, and others, were debating whether the quantity of money in England was greater or leſs than at the Revolution, the circumſtance was not adverted to, that ſince the Revolution there cannot have been leſs than four hundred millions ſterling imported into Europe; and therefore, the quantity in England ought at leaſt to have been four times greater than it was at the Revolution, to be on a proportion with Europe. What England is now doing by paper, is what ſhe would have been able to have done by ſolid money, if gold and ſilver had come into the nation in the proportion it ought, or had not been ſent out; and ſhe is endeavouring to reſtore by paper the balance ſhe has loſt by money. It is certin, that the gold and ſilver which arrive annually in the regiſter-ſhips to Spain and Portugal, do*

The Revolution of France is attended with many novel circumſtances, not only in the political ſphere, but in the circle of money tranſactions. Among others, it ſhews that a government may be in a ſtate of inſolvency, and a nation rich. So far as the fact is confined to the late government of France, it was inſolvent; becauſe the Nation would no longer ſupport its extravagance, and therefore it could no longer ſupport itſelf—but with reſpect to the Nation, all the means exiſted. A government may be ſaid to be inſolvent every time it applies to a nation to diſcharge its arrears. The inſolvency of the late government of France, and the preſent government of England, differed in no other reſpect than as the diſpoſitions of the people differ. The people of France refuſed their aid to the old government; and the people of England ſubmit to taxation without inquiry. What is called the Crown in England, has been inſolvent ſeveral times; the laſt of which, publicly known, was in May 1777, when it applied to the Nation to diſcharge upwards of £600,000, private debts, which otherwiſe it could not pay.

It was the error of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and all thoſe who were unacquainted with the affairs of France, to confound the French Nation with the French Government. The French nation, in effect, endeavoured to render the late government inſolvent, for the purpoſe of taking government into its own hands; and it reſerved its means for the ſupport of the new government. In a country of ſuch vaſt extent and population as France, the natural means cannot be wanting; and the political means appear the inſtant the Nation is

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not remain in theſe countries. Taking the value half in gold and half in ſilver, it is about four hundred tons annually; and from the number of ſhips and galleons employed in the trade of bringing thoſe metals from South America to Portugal and Spain, the quantity ſufficiently proves itſelf, without referring to the regiſters.

In the ſituation England now is, it is impoſſible ſhe can increaſe in money. High taxes not only leſſen the property of the individuals, but they leſſen alſo the money-capital of a nation, by inducing ſmuggling, which can only be carried on by gold and ſilver. By the politics which the Britiſh government have carried on with the inland powers of Germany and the Continent, it has made an enemy of all the maritime powers, and is therefore obliged to keep up a large navy; but though the navy is built in England, the naval ſtores muſt be purchaſed from abroad, and that from countries where the greateſt part muſt be paid for in gold and ſilver. Some fallacious rumours have been ſet afloat in England to induce a belief of money, and, among others, that of the French refugees bringing great quantities. The idea is ridiculous. The general part of the money in France is ſilver; and it would take upwards of twenty of the largeſt broad-wheel waggons, with ten horſes each, to remove one million ſterling of ſilver. Is it then to be ſuppoſed, that a few people ſtealing on horſe-back, or in poſt-chaiſes, in a ſecret manner, and having the French Cuſtom-houſe to paſs, and the ſea to croſs, could bring even a ſufficiency for their own expences?

When millions of money are ſpoken of, it ſhould be recollected, that ſuch ſums can only accumulate in a country by ſlow degrees, and a long proceſſion of time. The moſt frugal ſyſtem that England could now adopt would not recover, in a century, the balance ſhe has loſt in money ſince the commencement of the Hanover ſucceſſion. She is ſeventy millions behind France, and ſhe muſt be in ſome conſiderable proportion behind every country in Europe, becauſe the returns of the Engliſh mint do not ſhew an increaſe of money, while the regiſters of Liſbon and Cadiz ſhew an European increaſe of between three and four hundred millions ſterling.

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diſpoſed to permit them. When Mr. Burke in a ſpeech laſt Winter in the Britiſh Parliament, *caſt his eyes over the map of Europe, and ſaw a chaſm that once was France*, he talked like a dreamer of dreams. The ſame natural France exiſted as before, and all the natural means exiſted with it. The only chaſm was that which the extinction of deſpotiſm had left, and which was to be filled up with a conſtitution more formidable in reſources than the power which had expired.

Although the French nation rendered the late government inſolvent, it did not permit the inſolvency to act towards the creditors; and the creditors conſidering the Nation as the real paymaſter, and the government only as the agent, reſted themſelves on the Nation in preference to the government. This appears greatly to diſturb Mr. Burke, as the precedent is fatal to the policy by which governments have ſuppoſed themſelves ſecure. They have contracted debts, with a view of attaching what is called the monied intereſt of a Nation to their ſupport; but the example in France ſhews, that the permanent ſecurity of the creditor is in the Nation, and not in the government; and that in all poſſible revolutions that may happen in governments, the means are always with the Nation, and the Nation always in exiſtence. Mr. Burke argues, that the creditors ought to have abided the fate of the government which they truſted; but the National Aſſembly conſidered them as the creditors of the Nation, and not of the government—of the maſter, and not of the ſteward.

Notwithſtanding the late government could not diſcharge the current expences, the preſent government has paid off a great part of the capital. This has been accompliſhed by two means; the one by leſſening the expences of government, and the other by the ſale of the monaſtic and eccleſiaſtical landed eſtates. The devotees and penitent debauchees, extortioners and miſers of former days, to enſure themſelves a better world than that which they were about to leave, had bequeathed immenſe property in truſt to the prieſthood, for *pious uſes*; and the prieſthood kept it for themſelves. The National Aſſembly has ordered it to be ſold for the good of the whole nation, and the prieſthood to be decently provided for.

In conſequence of the Revolution, the annual intereſt of the debt of France will be reduced at leaſt ſix millions ſterling, by paying off upwards of one hundred millions of the capital; which, with leſſening the former expences of government at leaſt three millions, will place France in a ſituation worthy the imitation of Europe.

Upon a whole review of the ſubject, how vaſt is the contraſt! While Mr. Burke has been talking of a general bankruptcy in France, the National Aſſembly has been paying off the capital of its debt; and while taxes have increaſed near a million a-year in England, they have lowered ſeveral millions a-year in France. Not a word has either Mr. Burke or Mr. Pitt ſaid about French affairs, or the ſtate of the French finances, in the preſent ſeſſion of Parliament. The ſubject begins to be too well underſtood, and impoſition ſerves no longer.

There is a general enigma running through the whole of Mr. Burke's Book. He writes in a rage againſt the National Aſſembly; but what is he enraged about? If his aſſertions were as true as they are groundleſs, and that France, by her Revolution, had annihilated her power, and become what he calls a *chaſm*, it might excite the grief of a Frenchman (conſidering himſelf as a national man), and provoke his rage againſt the National Aſſembly: But why ſhould it excite the rage of Mr. Burke?—Alas! it is not the Nation of France that Mr. Burke means, but the COURT; and every Court in Europe, dreading the ſame fate, is in mourning. He writes

neither in the character of a Frenchman nor an Engliſhman, but in the fawning character of that creature known in all countries, and a friend to none, a COURTIER. Whether it be the Court of Verſailles, or the Court of St. James's, or of Carlton-Houſe, or the Court in expectation, ſignifies not; for the caterpillar principles of all Courts and Courtiers are alike. They form a common policy throughout Europe, detached and ſeparate from the intereſt of Nations: And while they appear to quarrel, they agree to plunder. Nothing can be more terrible to a Court or a Courtier, than the Revolution of France. That which is a bleſſing to Nations, is bitterneſs to them; and as their exiſtence depends on the duplicity of a country, they tremble at the approach of principles, and dread the precedent that threatens their overthrow.

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CONCLUSION.

REASON and Ignorance, the oppoſites of each other, influence the great bulk of mankind. If either of theſe can be rendered ſufficiently extenſive in a country, the machinery of Government goes eaſily on. Reaſon obeys itſelf; and ignorance ſubmits to whatever is dictated to it.

The two modes of Government which prevail in the world, are, *firſt*, Government by election and repreſentation: *Secondly*, Government by hereditary ſucceſſion. The former is generally known by the name of republic; the latter by that of monarchy and ariſtocracy.

Thoſe two diſtinct and oppoſite forms erect themſelves on the two diſtinct and oppoſite baſes of Reaſon and Ignorance. As the exerciſe of Government requires talents and abilities, and as talents and abilities cannot have hereditary deſcent, it is evident that hereditary ſucceſſion requires a belief from man, to which his reaſon cannot ſubſcribe, and which can only be eſtabliſhed upon his ignorance; and the more ignorant any country is, the better it is fitted for this ſpecies of Government.

On the contrary, Government, in a well-conſtituted republic, requires no belief from man beyond what his reaſon can give. He ſees the *rationale* of the whole ſyſtem, its origin and its operations; and as it is beſt ſupported when beſt underſtood, the human faculties act with boldneſs, and acquire, under this form of Government, a gigantic manlineſs.

As, therefore, each of thoſe forms acts on a different baſe, the one moving freely by the aid of reaſon, the other by ignorance; we have next to conſider what it is that gives motion to that ſpecies of government which is called mixed government, or, as it is ſometimes ludicrouſly ſtyled, a Government of *this*, *that*, and *t'other*.

The moving power in this ſpecies of Government is, of neceſſity, corruption. However imperfect election and repreſentation may be in mixed Governments, they ſtill give exerciſe to a greater portion of reaſon than is convenient to the hereditary part; and therefore it becomes neceſſary to buy the reaſon up. A mixed Government is an imperfect every-thing, cementing and ſoldering the diſcordant parts together by corruption, to act as a whole. Mr. Burke appears highly diſguſted, that France, ſince ſhe had reſolved on a revolution, did not adopt what he calls, "*A Britiſh Conſtitution*;" and the regretful manner in which he expreſſes himſelf on this occaſion, implies a ſuſpicion, that the Britiſh Conſtitution needed ſomething to keep its defects in countenance.

In mixed Governments there is no reſponſibility: The parts cover each other till reſponſibility is loſt; and the corruption which moves the machine, contrives at the ſame time its own eſcape. When it is laid down as a maxim, that *a King can do no wrong*, it places him in a ſtate of ſimilar ſecurity with that of ideots and perſons inſane, and reſponſibility is out of the queſtion with reſpect to himſelf. It then deſcends upon the Miniſter, who ſhelters himſelf under a majority in Parliament, which, by places, penſions, and corruption, he can always command; and that majority juſtifies itſelf by the

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ſame authority with which it protects the Miniſter. In this rotatory motion reſponſibility is thrown off from the parts, and from the whole.

When there is a part in a Government which can do no wrong, it implies that it does nothing; and is only the machine of another power by whoſe advice and direction it acts. What is ſuppoſed to be the King in mixed Governments, is the Cabinet; and as the Cabinet is always a part of the Parliament, and the members juſtify in one character what they adviſe and act in another, a mixed Government becomes a continual enigma, entailing upon a country, by the quantity of corruption neceſſary to ſolder the parts, the expence of ſupporting all the forms of government at once, and finally reſolving itſelf into a Government by a Committee; in which the adviſers, the actors, the approvers, the juſtifiers, the perſons reſponſible, and the perſons not reſponſible, are the ſame perſons.

By this pantomimical contrivance, and change of ſcene and character, the parts help each other out in matters which neither of them ſingly would aſſume to act. When money is to be obtained, the maſs of variety apparently diſſolves, and a profuſion of parliamentary praiſes paſſes between the parts. Each admires with aſtoniſhment, the wiſdom, the liberality, the diſintereſtedneſs of the other; and all of them breathe a pitying ſigh at the burthens of the nation.

But in a well-conſtituted republic, nothing of this ſoldering, praiſing, and pitying, can take place; the repreſentation being equal throughout the country, and complete in itſelf, however it may be arranged into legiſlative and executive, they have all one and the ſame natural ſource. The parts are not foreigners to each other, like democracy, ariſtocracy, and monarchy. As there are no diſcordant diſtinctions, there is nothing to corrupt by compromiſe, nor confound by contrivance. Public meaſures appeal of themſelves to the underſtanding of the Nation, and reſting on their own merits, diſown any flattering application to vanity. The continual whine of lamenting the burden of taxes, however ſucceſsfully it may be practiſed in mixed Governments, is inconſiſtent with the ſenſe and ſpirit of a republic. If taxes are neceſſary, they are of courſe advantageous; but if they require an apology, the apology itſelf implies an impeachment. Why then is man thus impoſed upon, or why does he impoſe upon himſelf?

When men are ſpoken of as kings and ſubjects, or when Government is mentioned under the diſtinct or combined heads of monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy, what is it that *reaſoning* man is to underſtand by the terms? If there really exiſted in the world two or more diſtinct and ſeparate *elements* of human power, we ſhould then ſee the ſeveral origins to which thoſe terms would deſcriptively apply; but as there is but one ſpecies of man, there can be but one element of human power, and that element is man himſelf. Monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy, are but creatures of imagination; and a thouſand ſuch may be contrived as well as three.

FROM the Revolutions of America and France, and the ſymptoms that have appeared in other countries, it is evident that the opinion of the world is changing with reſpect to ſyſtems of Government, and that revolutions are not within the compaſs of political calculations. The progreſs of time and circumſtances which men aſſign to the accompliſhment of great changes, is too mechanical to meaſure the force of the mind, and the rapidity of reflection, by which revolutions are generated. All the old Governments have received a ſhock from thoſe that already appear, and which were once more improbable, and are a greater ſubject of wonder, than a general revolution in Europe would be now.

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When we ſurvey the wretched condition of man under the monarchical and hereditary ſyſtems of Government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoveriſhed by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that thoſe ſyſtems are bad, and that a general revolution in the principle and conſtruction of Governments is neceſſary.

What is Government more than the management of the affairs of a Nation? It is not, and from its nature cannot be, the property of any particular man or family, but of the whole community, at whoſe expence it is ſupported; and though by force or contrivance it has been uſurped into an inheritance, the uſurpation cannot alter the right of things. Sovereignty, as a matter of right, appertains to the Nation only, and not to any individual; and a Nation has at all times an inherent indefeaſible right to aboliſh any form of Government it finds inconvenient, and eſtabliſh ſuch as accords with its intereſt, diſpoſition, and happineſs. The romantic and barbarous diſtinction of men into Kings and ſubjects, though it may ſuit the condition of courtiers, cannot that of citizens; and is exploded by the principle upon which Governments are now founded. Every citizen is a member of the ſovereignty, and, as ſuch, can acknowledge no perſonal ſubjection, and his obedience can be only to the laws.

When men think of what Government is, they muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe it to poſſeſs a knowledge of all the objects and matters upon which its authority is to be exerciſed. In this view of Government, the republican ſyſtem, as eſtabliſhed by America and France, operates to embrace the whole of a Nation, and the knowledge neceſſary to the intereſt of all the parts, is to be found in the center, which the parts by repreſentation form: But the old Governments are on a conſtruction that excludes knowledge as well as happineſs: Government by Monks, who know nothing of the world beyond the walls of a Convent, is as conſiſtent as government by Kings.

What were formerly called Revolutions, were little more than a change of perſons, or an alteration of local circumſtances. They roſe and fell like things of courſe, and had nothing in their exiſtence or their fate that could influence beyond the ſpot that produced them. But what we now ſee in the world, from the Revolutions of America and France, is a renovation of the natural order of things, a ſyſtem of principles as univerſal as truth and the exiſtence of man, and combining moral with political happineſs and national proſperity.

'I. Men are born and always continue free, and equal in reſpect of their 'rights. Civil diſtinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public 'utility.

'II. The end of all political aſſociations is the preſervation of the natural and impreſcriptible rights of man; and theſe rights are liberty, property, ſecurity, and reſiſtance of oppreſſion.

'III. The Nation is eſſentially the ſource of all ſovereignty; nor can any 'INDIVIDUAL, or ANY BODY OF MEN, be entitled to any authority 'which is not expreſsly derived from it.'

In theſe principles, there is nothing to throw a nation into confuſion by inflaming ambition. They are calculated to call forth wiſdom and abilities, and to exerciſe them for the public good, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular deſcriptions of men or families. Monarchical ſovereignty, the enemy of mankind, and the ſource of miſery, is aboliſhed; and ſovereignty itſelf is reſtored to its natural and original place, the Nation. Were this the caſe throughout Europe, the cauſe of wars would be taken away.

It

It is attributed to Henry the Fourth of France, a man of an enlarged and benevolent heart, that he propoſed about the year 1610, a plan for aboliſhing war in Europe. The plan conſiſted in conſtituting an European Congreſs, or, as the French authors ſtyle it, a Pacific Republic; by appointing delegates from the ſeveral nations, who were to act as a court of arbitration in any diſputes that might ariſe between nation and nation.

Had ſuch a plan been adopted at the time it was propoſed, the taxes of England and France, as two of the parties, would have been at leaſt ten millions ſterling annually to each nation leſs than they were at the commencement of the French Revolution.

To conceive a cauſe why ſuch a plan has not been adopted (and that inſtead of a congreſs for the purpoſe of *preventing* war, it has been called only to *terminate* a war, after a fruitleſs expence of ſeveral years), it will be neceſſary to conſider the intereſt of governments as a diſtinct intereſt to that of nations.

Whatever is the cauſe of taxes to a nation, becomes alſo the means of revenue to a government. Every war terminates with an addition of taxes, and conſequently with an addition of revenue; and in any event of war, in the manner they are now commenced and concluded, the power and intereſt of governments are increaſed. War, therefore, from its productiveneſs, as it eaſily furniſhes the pretence of neceſſity for taxes and appointments to places and offices, becomes a principal part of the ſyſtem of old governments; and to eſtabliſh any mode to aboliſh war, however advantageous it might be to nations, would be to take from ſuch government the moſt lucrative of its branches. The frivolous matters upon which war is made, ſhow the diſpoſition and avidity of governments to uphold the ſyſtem of war, and betray the motives upon which they act.

Why are not Republics plunged into war, but becauſe the nature of their government does not admit of an intereſt diſtinct from that of the nation? Even Holland, though an ill-conſtructed Republic, and with a commerce extending over the world, exiſted nearly a century without war: And the inſtant the form of government was changed in France, the republican principles of peace and domeſtic proſperity and œconomy aroſe with the new government; and the ſame conſequences would follow the ſame cauſes in other nations.

As war is the ſyſtem of government on the old conſtruction, the animoſity which nations reciprocally entertain, is nothing more than what the policy of their governments excites, to keep up the ſpirit of the ſyſtem. Each government accuſes the other of perfidy, intrigue, and ambition, as the means of heating the imagination of their reſpective nations, and incenſing them to hoſtilities. Man is not the enemy of man, but through the medium of a falſe ſyſtem of government. Inſtead, therefore, of exclaiming againſt the ambition of kings, the exclamation ſhould be directed againſt the principle of ſuch governments; and inſtead of ſeeking to reform the individual, the wiſdom of a Nation ſhould apply itſelf to reform the ſyſtem.

Whether the forms and maxims of governments which are ſtill in practice, were adapted to the condition of the world at the period they were eſtabliſhed, is not in this caſe the queſtion. The older they are, the leſs correſpondence can they have with the preſent ſtate of things. Time, and change of circumſtances and opinions, have the ſame progreſſive effect in rendering modes of government obſolete, as they have upon cuſtoms and manners.—Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and the tranquil arts, by which the proſperity of nations is beſt promoted, require a different ſyſtem of govern-

ment,

ment, and a different ſpecies of knowledge to direct its operations, than what might have been required in the former condition of the world.

As it is not difficult to perceive, from the enlightened ſtate of mankind, that hereditary Governments are verging to their decline, and that Revolutions on the broad baſis of national ſovereignty, and Government by repreſentation, are making their way in Europe, it would be an act of wiſdom to anticipate their approach, and produce Revolutions by reaſon and accommodation, rather than commit them to the iſſue of convulſions.

From what we now ſee, nothing of reform in the political world ought to be held improbable. It is an age of Revolutions, in which every thing may be looked for. The intrigue of Courts, by which the ſyſtem of war is kept up, may provoke a confederation of Nations to aboliſh it: And an European Congreſs to patronize the progreſs of free Government, and promote the civilization of Nations with each other, is an event nearer in probability, than once were the revolutions and alliance of France and America.

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